
Hagure Yuusha no Aesthetica

Volume7

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はぐれ勇者 鬼畜美学のVII

上栖綴人

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鬼畜美学
VII





「——喰らいやがれ、クソ親父っ！」

剛毅の顔面目掛けて、右の拳を全力で叩き込む。



そういう事になつてゐるかある程度は想像がついていたが
やはり肉眼で見るとこんどもしないインパクトだった。

「取り敢えず……少なくとも結束は深まつた
と言つて良いんでしようね、この場合」





はぐれ勇者の鬼畜美学VII

エスティティカ

「——喰らいやがれ、クソ親父っ！」

剛毅の顔面目掛けて、右の拳を全力で叩き込む。



Prologue - The future cannot be avoided

Part 1

It is an eerily cold silence.

At night the JPN Babel Student Council room is like a silent world.

In the darkness a silhouette of a person is cast from a single light source.

A square liquid crystal display fills the room with superfluous light.

It is JPN Babel's student council president's, also Japan's COCOON representative's -- Hikami Kyoya's personal computer. Real-time updates are constantly appearing on the screen.

It is currently displaying the status of the special autonomous region established in Japan for the people who have returned from the alternate worlds.

At the top of JPN Babel is Kyoya, who is responsible for coordinating all matters in the special autonomous region. Therefore Kyoya must compile the various information related to the special autonomous region.

While Kyoya is looking at the monitor, his smile quietly deepens.

Then he mutters:

"Movement, and I believe he....."

Part 2

Hikami Kyoya is examining the gathered intelligence.

He is primarily looking at a series of events that took place in the evening two days ago to early morning yesterday.

These are the records of the special antonymous region -- a huge artificial island floating in Tokyo Bay.

That night, Kyoya requested some kind of "substance" to be transported to the special antonymous region.

It is a substance that has manifested in this world, a lower dimension. The substance is from a high-dimensional life form -- the Japanese Government researched and cultured cells under the utmost secrecy.

Kyoya had already obtained them, the so called - <P Cells> or <Phoenix Cells>.

He even had to steal to get them.

However, the Japanese government can not condemn Kyoya's act.

After all, COCOON is responsible for co-ordination and management of all technology and abilities learned from alternate worlds.

He was named a permanent member to the new United Nations -- the G7 -- although COCOON assisted in establishing the special antonymous region and Babel in Japan, the Japanese Government isn't allowed to research or develop other world technology.

Therefore the Japanese Government's experiment is in violation of the rules set forth by COCOON.

Basically the <Phoenix Cells> shouldn't exist.

Even if they were stolen, it cannot be made public.

"Can't let the cat out of bag, they still have to continue keeping it a secret"

In order to transport the <Phoenix Cells> at any cost, beforehand Kyoya arranged several decoys to distract the enemy.

However many of these decoys were destroyed -- furthermore to maintain the utmost secrecy, only a few had known that they were decoys to begin with.

The Japanese government does not want the existence of <Phoenix Cells> to be announced to the world. Therefore recapturing the <Phoenix Cells> through any means is to be expected. Kyoya has never denied that the Japanese government's involvement is a possibility.

However the Japanese government's intelligence capability is quite extraordinary to have already locked onto so many decoys.

Even the nearly impossible to expose decoys have been attacked one after another.

In addition, they even attacked anyone potentiality linked to a decoy.

Only individuals or groups on equal footing with COCOON would have the ability to do that.

However COCOON doesn't need act in such a roundabout manner to condemn Kyoya's unauthorized actions. They can directly enforce punitive damages on Kyoya.

More importantly, Kyoya did not yet violate any laws in COCOON's eyes.

After all, Kyoya's "scheme" is predicated on the truth being concealed from COCOON.

This type of feat took considerable skill.

Therefore there may be only one possible answer.

Kyoya firmly believes that -- Crimson Twilight^[1] will act.

They should already be aware that Kyoya perpetrated the robbery.

However Hikami Kyoya's smile is still as bright as before.

"I'm very sorry, the <Phoenix Cells> have already fallen into my hands."

Kyoya is calmly reflecting over the current situation.

Re-examining all of the chess pieces on the board -- including his own.

In the first place, other than COCOON it is impossible to find out about the current situation.

The top secret research regarding high-dimensional beings betrayed COCOON's overall plan on alternate worlds. Thus it is impossible for the Japanese government to spontaneously confess to their crimes.

Moreover from Crimson Twilight's standpoint, it should be better if Kyoya has the <Phoenix Cells> rather than COCOON.

After all, compared to the heavily fortified COCOON headquarters, stealing the <Phoenix Cells> from JPN Babel school is much less difficult.

Kyoya is naturally fully prepared and ready at any time for a counterattack.

However, this is an indisputable fact that has already been perceived by the enemy.

It seems that it is necessary to speed up the pace for the whole scheme.

Granted it doesn't hurt to figure out what the problems are. At least the leadership role rests in his own hands.

Basically, there doesn't appear to be any hitches in Kyoya's plan

Reluctantly saying so, probably only one individual constitutes an element of uncertainty -- and Kyoya is unable to predict the latent nature of that enemy's action.

Kyoya said in a pleasant tone the name of that uncertain element:

"I've got a head start Ousawa-kun What will you do next?"

Kyoya is smiling from ear to ear gazing at the gauge on the computer screen.

The gauge shows the degree of progress made on his current project.

After obtaining the <Phoenix Cells>, officially the scheme enters into its second phase. Also, the second phase is now on the verge of being completed.

According to the original plan, tomorrow the curtain drops on the third phase.

At that time no one will be able to stop Kyoya.

Not even COCOON's strongest -- Michael Arcruid.

Naturally using the same logic, it is possible to stop Kyoya at this stage.

If COCOON finds out about the current situation everything will go up in smoke.

Kyoya will lose all his power and status in COCOON, and maybe even lose his precious life.

Even if he luckily got away with the robbery, from now on he will not be able to do whatever he pleases.

Naturally Kyoya has his reasons for selecting such a risky plan.

That's because of Ousawa Miu.

Kyoya discovered a major "secret" concerning Miu.

The Norn screening named her as the "True Hero" Ousawa Akatsuki's little sister.

However that fabricated identity was merely for her to exist in this world.

Hikami Kyoya is very clear.

Her true identity is that she grew up in a alternate world of Alayzard as the Demon King's daughter -- Myuu.

Many teenagers have been summoned to alternate worlds for more than 30 years now. However, the case of inhabitants from alternate worlds coming to this world has never been officially documented.

A very rare case of tenancy.

Miu is undoubtedly a very rare object to study.

However, that was fundamentally regarded as nothing, after Kyoya become aware of a gargantuan secret.

Let alone Akatsuki, even Miu doesn't realize her secret.

That is -- Ousawa Miu is in fact an ultra high-dimensional being

Ultra high-dimensional beings have the ability to manipulate all phenomenon. Once you obtain this kind of ability, undoubtedly you can dominate the entire world -- This is what the "Y Plan" entails.

Kyoya has the chance to achieve COCOON's ultimate goal.

A once in a blue moon chance.

Hikami Kyoya will absolutely not miss this opportunity.

To obtain the ultra high-dimensional Miu and grasp the absolute power inside her.

When that moment comes he will transcend everything,
becoming an existence on an equal footing with God.

Part 3

"Well....."

Kyoya muttered to himself while turning off the computer.

When the monitor on his personal computer shut down, the room became wrapped in complete darkness.

The next moment, the sound of the student council room door opening could be heard.

At the same time, the ceiling lights turned on, lighting up the room.

Another member of the student council walked into the room.

It is Uesaki Ryohei, the secretary of the student council.

"Oh, Kyoya you're still here?"

Ryohei noticed Kyoya's presence.

"It's already so late. What are you doing here? At least turn on a light."

"I was just thinking about a few things."

Kyoya replied with the usual smile.

It was like his previously intoxicated with power expression was a lie judging from his ability to immediately appear clam.

Therefore.....

"Hmm I see. The student council president indeed works really hard. There are always a lot of things to worry about."

Ryohei shrugged and walked towards his seat. He seemingly accepted what Kyoya said.

Ryohei's response as well as his reaction gave Kyoya a sense of satisfaction.

It also appears that Kyoya didn't look anxious or complacent. He remained as cold as ice, exuding a sense of normalcy.

Even though he is about to realize the ambitions that he had aspired to for many years, there is still no change to his normal calm demeanor.

Then Ryohei suddenly remembered something.

"Oh, that's right. Before the start of the new semester concerning the system update, you're going to"

"Naturally it will be conducted as planned."

Kyoya seemingly answered matter of factly--

"-- It will officially launch tomorrow night."

Part 4

Plain rice tastes the best immediately after it's cooked.

Regardless eating it as is, enjoying it with a raw egg covered with natto is also very delicious.

Basically there is no substitute for piping hot rice.

However, there are very few cases where such common sense is overturned.

Sushi is one of them.

However, to properly make home-made sushi is not an easy task.

After all, there is a relatively high technical threshold to make sushi, not every housewife has a sushi chef's skill.

Although the bulk of scattered sushi materials can be directly purchased from the supermarket, eggs and peas silk processing still holds a certain degree of difficulty.

The market does sell sushi platters, but they are less appetizing.

Having said that, a relaxing way to enjoy sushi at home still exists.

The answer is

"Ah ha ha ~ hand-rolled sushi ~ "

Cheers coming from the living room reached Onizuka Kenya's ears.

Onizuka was standing in the kitchen.

He braved the snowy vapor from the stainless steel stock pot smoke on top of the gas stove.

"Damn.... Why should I tire myself like a dog? ... "

Gazing at the slowly rising steam, Onizuka can't help muttering

Onizuka is cooking miso soup they way he likes it which is with a clam taste.

Since he lives alone, there is no reason to make miso soup at home when he could always just have instant soup cups.

Not to mention the hand-rolled sushi, Onizuka never even had the idea to eat hand-rolled sushi before.

However, Onizuka is making hand-rolled sushi and miso soup for tonight's dinner.

This is definitely not what Onizuka's menu typically looks like.

There was a certain reason why it had come to this.

"Ken-chan, Ken-chan, I do not want to shake the fan."

An overly familiar voice calls Onizuka with a little bit spoiled tone.

The girl was a freeloader that was temporary living together with Onizuka.

She is Tiana · Randohauze.[\[2\]](#)

"If you insist on eating hand-rolled sushi by all means then just obediently fan it."

That's right!

The whole episode started with Tiana, who was obviously a foreigner, said on a whim "I want to eat good sushi", but then she didn't seem like a foreigner as she started to say "I absolutely must eat sushi with clams and miso soup". This kind of Japanese cuisine is more than what most Japanese adhere to. Onizuka already experienced one of Tiana's outbursts. With her stubborn personality that left no margin for error, no matter how reluctant his heart was Onizuka could only concede.

In the past, it was unthinkable for Onizuka to let a girl lead him around by the nose.

Although he was gradually accepting his fate of being lead around by the nose, Onizuka couldn't help think it was exasperating.

....Ahhhhhhh....What the hell am I doing?

Be that as it may, Onizuka is still somewhat moved.

Even though he hates the hassle more than anything else.

Now he is even willing to cook for someone other than himself.

"I probably took the wrong medicine."

After making the bitter remark, he once more concentrates on the stainless steel pot on a gas stove.

However the time and effort only required a minimum amount of trouble despite being home cooking.

Do-it-yourself sushi is made as follows. First pour the right amount of sweetened vinegar with the boiling rice. Mix until it's well-distributed, then add the supermarket bought ready-made sushi, and finally roll it in a layer of nori. As for Onizuka's process for cooking miso soup, next you add the split sand clams to the boiled water, then mixed it with miso soup stock, and at last it is completed.

"Oh, by the way Ken-chan, don't forget to turn off the heat before you add the miso."

"Who do you think you are? Mind your own business, I do not need your meddling."

"Well This is a little strange to say, but why doesn't this home have a hair dryer?"

Tiana expressed her inner doubts.

Taking advantage of a hair dryer blower feature would reduce the temperature of the rice more efficiently than their fanning.

However, since the day before yesterday the Onizuka's home is without a hairdryer.

The reason is simple

"Did you forget? A certain idiot threw it and broke it."

"That is also because some pervert was spying on someone's body."

To Onizuka's displeased voice, Tiana, not to be outdone, immediately retorted with sarcasm.

The now broken hairdryer was cheap anyway, bought when Onizuka first began living in the apartment.

Since it had already been used for a few years, it was nearly at the end of its lifespan.

Then the poor hair dryer was conveniently picked up by Tiana and thrown at Onizuka's forehead. After the hair dryer hit its target, it landed hard on the floor and broke.

Afterwards no matter how many times it is pressed it won't turn on.

"If you cut corners now, the distinctive flavor of the sushi will be greatly affected Hey! you have to just accept it."

Tiana sighed and continued to fan.

"But having to fan is boring.... ... we are space aliens!"

"Stop with these childish antics! Even if you must play, you shouldn't speak into the spinning electric fan so close!"

"This is the lair of the bored devious lion star people!"

"....Okay, okay, I know you're a visitor. I would love to play along with you. Oh, by the way...keep fanning."

A little joking around. This is the first time in his life cooking miso soup.

After some time

"Almost right."

After the appropriate amount of time, Onizuka turned off the fire.

Then put the miso seasoning into the pot, stirring it back and forth with chopsticks.

This should be the right recipe. Just to be sure, Onizuka scooped a small amount into the ladle to taste.

The clam's distinctive sweet flavor suddenly spread throughout his mouth.

Its flavor isn't bad. For a beginner it could be considered quite good.

Onizuka stuck his head out from the kitchen, looking towards the living room.

"The miso soup is finished, you over there-"

Only half of the words had to be said.

"Aha, Perfect timing, I just got here a moment ago."

Tiana responds with an innocent smile.

Onizuka's veins suddenly burst out on his temple.

"..... Hey."

"Is there something wrong, Ken-chan? Your appearance is even more ferocious than normal."

"....Where has the vinegar rice gone? "

On the table was an empty platter.

The rice was missing.

Tiana still looked at ease.

"Eh?" Really! did you ask me? I just got here."

"Don't give me that nonsense! One person ate all the vinegar rice! "

"This one... ...the temperature was suitable for the vinegar rice, you must personally eat it to know. "

Tiana sticks her tongue out.

Of course when Tiana offered to help, Onizuka already considered the risk of her eating the vinegar rice.

Therefore Onizuka's solution was to wait until the last moment to bring out the sushi ingredients.

He never imagine that Tiana couldn't wait for all ingredients to be on the table and was capable of wiping out all of the vinegar rice in one breath.

"I'm sorry. I was careless."

"Give me a break! One person eating an amount which is the equivalent to six bowls of steamed rice, still dares to say that was careless?"

The Onizuka household rice cooker could only cook a maximum of three cups of rice.

However, For Tiana's gluttonous stomach clearly three cups of rice was inadequate.

So Onizuka boiled three cups of rice and made Tiana responsible for fanning it, then again quickly prepared three more cups of rice.

Carefully considering all the time needed before it would all have been ready to eat.

Fortunately the sushi material is safe and sound.

Making more vinegar rice shouldn't take too much more time.

"..... Well, you lost."

"Don't be so angry. I know I'm in the wrong, so I left the best part for Ken-chan."

"The best part? Where is it? I don't see it?"

The platter on the table was completely empty.

There wasn't a trace of the vinegar rice.

Onizuka looked puzzled.

"Really slow, it's here - this · la ~"

Tiana winks her right eye.

At this moment Onizuka finally understood Tiana's meaning.

If you look closely, on Tiana's right cheek is a grain of rice.

Murderous intent burst forth in his mind.

"....."

Onizuka silently reached out-

"What the? It's really strange that you're actually not mad. Yeah. Well, that's good. There's no need to be modest, Don't hesitate to eat it--Huh?"

....He grabbed Tiana's collar and started dragging her.

Through the opened window that was just repaired yesterday, he threw Tiana out onto the veranda.

He shut and locked the windows, and drew back the curtains.

Locking Tiana out of the house.

Part 5

"Come on! Ken-chan there's really nothing to be ashamed of"

Isolated on the veranda, Tiana Randohauze sighed helplessly.

Actually ignoring a grain of rice on a girl's cheek is simply outrageous.

In a way isn't this disrespectful to the farmer?

He should apologize to the farmer.

Frustration aside, Tiana reluctantly took the rice grain off herself, and ate it.

"Fine, now what to do....."

Of course, one way is to break the window, but the window just got fixed and she would also feel somewhat guilty at heart.

-Well, it can be difficult for adolescent boys to act in front of girls.

As a mature woman, I should be lenient and forgive him.

Boil, stir into vinegar after the meal... he probably would have cut it.

Anyway, after he boils some more rice he should cool down a bit. It shouldn't take longer than 30 minutes, I can be patient.

"How should I spend the time waiting?" Tiana looks around the corner.

"Huh? The futon that was hung out during the day was forgotten."

The veranda railing was draped with the futon.

It was the futon that Tiana just bought.

Onizuka usually doesn't have any visitors. Therefore his home isn't equipped to accommodate visitors' needs.

Since Tiana intends to stay there for awhile, she had to purchase a few necessities to be able to live there.

This futon was just used and bought at the store yesterday, and since it was such a beautiful sunny day today, Tiana especially hanged the futon on the porch.

Therefore.....

"Ah, the fluffy baked feeling from the Sun is gone."

Touching the futon draped over the railing, Tiana was unable to hide her disappointment.

However, it can not be helped.

After all, it was all started by Tiana who suddenly said "I want to eat the sushi", while she was forcibly pulling Onizuka out shopping.

After returning home from shopping, Tiana was in good mood and anxiously awaited for the sushi to be made. She had simply forgotten all about the futon hanging on the railing.

"..... Hmm, Come to think of it, I also forgot a very important thing"

The puzzled Tiana was about to remember something, she tilted her head–

Suddenly a strong wind blew through the balcony.

This is a commonly seen phenomenon for a spring night.

Tiana was lost in her thoughts, the high winds blew around her side ponytail.

"Ah"

The wind gust caused the futon to slowly start to slide off the railing.

The whiteness of the futon in front of her eyes was helplessly falling towards the ground as if it were being swallowed up by the darkness of the night.

However.....

"-Oh."

Tiana cried out and quickly stretched out her right hand trying to grab it.

The futon stopped falling.

It was floating in midair for a brief time before it was close enough for Tiana's hands to reach.

Instead of using magic to create a strong wind to blow it up, there seemed to be a thread hooked to it that pulled it up.

The futon is attracted to Tiana's hands, as if by telekinesis.

"That was da-dangerous, because Ken-chan especially bought this futon for me."

Tiana said so while gripping the edge of the futon-

-It wasn't simple magic that Tiana used just now.

Rather those who returned from alternate worlds twice, get a specific ability from the alternate dimension that only they are able to have.

This special abilities included all of the four elements, fire, water, earth, and wind, coupled with elements of light and dark to

develop "element magic". Combined with the ability to control space and gravity "physical magic", these returnees have radically different abilities as different as black and white.

This is the concept where a human being gets closer to a higher dimension being.

This differs from the understanding of the common principles of magic. Individuals with these abilities in COCOON and Crimson Twilight are the strongest simply because of this.

They have an overwhelming advantage.

Just when Tiana pulled back the futon-

An electronic sound suddenly rang out from her pocket.

She took out the cell phone while saying, "Yeah, yeah", Tiana pushes the call button.

"Yes, Randohauze."

"Hello there, Tiana you sound energetic."

"Oh, not you leader, what happened?"

"That... ... What do you think?"

A mischievous smile could be felt from the other end of the phone after that little banter.

The other is the leader of the world's most powerful terrorist group Crimson Twilight - Cecil Endheart.

From her tone it seems she is waiting for Tiana to answer.

Therefore Tiana bowed her head. I wonder what,

"Ah"

Tiana is shocked upon realizing what had happened.

"I'm glad, it seems you finally remembered."

The superior tone of Cecil increased her smile.

"No, no, no, I didn't forget. If I remember correctly, it should be called Yes, <T cells>!"

"It's the <P cells>. In addition, you can also go to the meeting place designated earlier now, I was unfortunately slow to anticipate this."

She explained, it was the day before yesterday that Cecil gave her the <P cells> assignment.

Even if we wanted to remedy it, a degree of damage is already done.

"Umm.... ... Leader are you angry?"

"Nope, I'm not angry."

"..... Really?"

"Well ... because like I told you the other day, I gave priority to the "other matter"."

Cecil paused for a moment, then continued to talk:

"You are somewhat more impulsive than some, but you're not a selfish person. At most it's just your instincts telling you how to proceed to the next step. Since the "other matter" is more important, you gave priority to something different than what I asked. It means that you thought that this was the right thing to do. If you gave priority to that request, ignoring what is right in front your eyes, even if you ended up succeeding, I wouldn't have been particularly happy. The reason is simple, because this is not what I particularly enjoy about your style."

That being said, Cecil took a breath and slightly lowered her volume.

"-But then again, your methods still need to be addressed, and cannot be brushed aside."

"That's mean"

"Hmm. The incident seems to be masterwork of Hikami Kyoya. Not only did he outwit the Japanese government, he even made a fool of COCOON. It's not unexpected that the <P cells> should already be in his hands."

"The enemy's in fighting may not necessarily be a good thing for the us, but Hikami Kyoya's betrayal seems a little too bold."

"Perhaps Hikami Kyoya believes the <P cells> have that kind of value. In any event, we can't miss this great opportunity to Wait, are you interested?"

"Of course. as long the <P cells> are in Hikami Kyoya's hands, it would be nice if they were taken, right?"

Confronted with Tiana's inquiry, Cecil on the other end of the line returns with an "oh" and nod.

"Kaidou is inside JPN Babel. I can ask him to send the school's layout as well as a plan of approach to you."

Motoharu Kaidou is also one of the members of "Crimson Twilight". When the familiar name hit her ear, Tiana suddenly very much wanted to meet up.

"Oh yeah, Kaido-chan^[3] is currently a student JPN Babel."

"That's right, but I don't know whether its fortunate or unfortunate that his identity has already been exposed. Also he has caught the eye of Nanase Haruka, the Vice President of the Student Council and public morals chairman. At most, he can act as a diversion for the enemy."

Cecil concluded.

"Tiana, I entrust the capturing of the <P cells> to you. I'm merely asking for results I won't pay any attention to your methods, so do whatever you want."

--How should we handle Hikami Kyoya?"

Suddenly in a low quiet voice Tiana threw out a question.

Then an even colder voice answers the question.

"For that guy to even betray COCOON - who knows what's going to happen? In order to avoid complications, ask him to leave as soon as possible."

".....and never come back?"

"However, he does have some home-court advantage over there. It's not necessary to force him by yourself. After all, the Japanese government researched and cultured the <P cells>. More than likely there will be some technical problems, plus Hikami Kyoya will unlikely keep them at hand. After obtaining the <P cells>, if in passing some noise reached COCOON, they will naturally offer to deal with Hikami Kyoya."

"..... Makes sense."

"What's more, if Kaido is at your side, then even if something really goes wrong, as long as it's against Hikami Kyoya, he can be easily beaten if it's two-to-one. That's if it comes down to it -"

At this point, Cecil's tone slightly changed.

"If you feel abduction of the <P cells> is too difficult, withdrawal won't do any harm. If things get out of control with Hikami Kyoya, any commotion can sink him. He put himself into this situation, so he should know that pretty well. It'll be ready for preventive measures. To sum up, if the need to retreat arises then immediately retreat. You must by all means not miss that opportunity."

"I understand. But on the other hand, if circumstances permit--"

Tiana paused slightly.

"Then I can kill him, right?"

"It's only natural. Those who obstruct our freedom and the will of the people, should be eradicated."

Even if the other is COCOON, who is positioned at the peak and supervises the world.

We don't have any reasons to make concessions.

There is no reason to retreat, not a tiny bit.

Only those with absolute faith can grasp the truth.

Any person who obstructs our freedom and the will of the people, will not be forgiven.

Because we are "Crimson Twilight".



If my eyes can't see the truth.

Then who will tell me—from now on, what am I supposed to believe?

Chapter 1 - The Girls Late-night Festival

Part 1

The body naturally becomes flush after getting out of the bath, requiring replenishment for its lost fluids.

Wearing only a bath towel around the neck, with a comfortable pair of shorts suited for relaxing at home.

Ousawa Akatsuki left the changing room to go to the kitchen, where he opened the refrigerator door.

The cool air leaked out and touched his body. While a little chilly it was still comfortable.

"Ah.....there it is."

After finding what he was looking for he instinctively smiled.

When he removed it from refrigerator it made a clanking noise in the palm of his hand.

Akatsuki grabbed a couple of bottles of cold milk to relieve his thirst.

He gently shut the refrigerator door behind him, then placed a bottle on the stainless steel kitchen counter. He used his thumb pressure to pop open the cap on the bottle of milk.

The cap bounced up into the air, rotating round and round, while it was dancing Akatsuki started chugging.

It was gone in one gulp.

"Ahh...fua! It simply is delicious."

The bottle just left his lips when he used the right thumb of the hand that was holding the glass to catch the falling cap.

Akatsuki wiped his lips with the back of the hand.

-- Most of the fresh milk on the market is sold in paper cartons and is less expensive than glass bottles of fresh milk, which now have become almost a luxury good. Even so, fresh milk is still being sold in bottles, and did not disappear from the market.

That is because they have an advantage that milk lovers go crazy over.

In a paper carton or poured into a cup, after touching the tip of the tongue a small sense of the milk's taste can be lost.

But bottled milk is different. It's container cool down along with the milk. So the moment the fresh milk touches the lips it is just concentrated pure deliciousness. And the satisfaction of drinking it in one gulp is even more wonderful.

Keeping the carton milk in the refrigerator is the best way to keep the taste of the milk. Same goes for the bottles of fresh milk.

-- Of course, Ousawa's refrigerator is also stocked with cartons of fresh milk. But he can't drink straight out of a carton for fear of the gripes the two girls living would have with him.

Paper cartons are no better at keeping the milk cool than glass bottles, but putting glasses for the milk in the refrigerator seemed to be a little too excessive.

So for Akatsuki, bottles of fresh milk are the perfect choice for combining both flavor and life style.

"If there is a downside.....it doesn't hold more."

With a wry smile Akatsuki put the empty bottle into the sink.

He picked up the second bottle, however this time he had no intentions of gulping it down.

Akatsuki only took tiny sips as he savored the fresh milk's flavor. Suddenly the door leading to the living room opened.

".....Ah, did you just get out of the bath?"

A young girl walked into the kitchen, and stood in front of Akatsuki.

Part 2

Miu came walking over looking a little embarrassed to be dressed in her pajamas.

For "certain reasons" she was only wearing the top part of her oversized pajamas. Despite her lovely features she still had a hint of childishness left. Her features could be said to be exquisite and possessed a charm that could enchant all men.

Especially -- the very destructive power her boobs posses from their magnitude.

Regardless of whether it was a man or woman, everyone's eyes were drawn in by her boobs.

Originally her pajamas were bought according to the dimensions of her chest, but now the bottom half of the pajamas were too loose.

She had no other options but to give up on the trousers and expose her white thighs.

Miu feared that her appearance was a little too shameful; the hem of her top barely covered anything.

"Excuse me, I came to wash some dishes."

After she said that to Akatsuki, Miu walked over to the sink -- next to him.

In her hand she held a tray loaded with multiple empty glasses and small plates.

Having finished a snack, she probably came to clear away the dishes.

However, whereas before there was only one person living in this house, now there are three: Akatsuki, Miu, and Listy.

Since Akatsuki was standing in the kitchen he could see the plates and cups on the tray -- there should only be enough for two people. However, the number of plates and glasses on the tray made it look like five people were here.

This means that Akatsuki appeared to have guests.

It was around midnight. Akatsuki just had a nice bath, and Miu was in her pajamas. However, there seemed to be guests in the Ousawa home.

"Hehe, he-heh, hun~"

Miu was cheerfully washing the dishes. After Akatsuki handed over the sink to her, with his fresh milk in hand he retreated out the rear.

However, near the breakfast table he stopped. His eyes were glued to Miu's hips as she leaned in to wash.

Usually after she showered she put on her pajamas without tying up her hair in a double pony tail, and let it hang down naturally. Miu's hair was long enough to reach her knees, just enough to completely cover her butt. Plus the hem from her pajama top allows her the freedom from worrying about someone being able to peep between the exposed gap left from her pajamas.

However today Miu had her hair up, probably because she had visitors over and it would presumably easier to be a good host if she tied up her hair in a double ponytail. She was humming while washes the dishes, and whenever Miu moved her hands her perfectly round butt could be seen swaying side to side.

-- Indescribably erotic.

"It seems that you're having a lot of fun."

"Yeah, I'm very happy. This is my first time hanging out with my friends at home all night."

Miu said, while joyfully laughing "Hehe".

It appeared Ousawa's home had three visitors, Izumi Chikage, Doumoto Kuzuha and Nanase Haruka. They were important friends to both Akatsuki and Miu, and irreplaceable companions.

Even when they returned to the alternate world Alayzard, the girls came with Miu and Akatsuki.

However, their chance to play together and deepen their friendship though those bonds didn't happen. They became friends through fighting together, because they once again visited Alayzard aiming to "end of war between Humans and Demons".

Therefore, Chikage proposed that the trio have a sleep over at Akatsuki's home.

.....Thanks to Izumi.

Chikage thought this was a good way for them to work out each others' issues weighing on their minds, and build a better friendship. It was also her idea to invite Haruka. She put forth a lot of effort into it.

Although they had some unpleasant memories, they all now decided to support each other, and help each other to face the challenges ahead. So it was essential to deepen their trust. After this Pajama Party, apart from trio of Miu, Chikage and Kuzuha, they hoped that Haruka and Listy could quickly blend into the group.

So Ousawa Akatsuki said in a bitter tone:

"My only regret, is that I'm excluded."

He wasn't allowed to participate in the five girls' late-night party.

Akatsuki was the odd-man out. Miu smiled, and tried to appease Akatsuki's mood.

"I told you, there is no way. Today is girls' night, boys are not allowed to join in, even if it's you."

"But I also want to become better friends."

Akatsuki drank half of the fresh milk and put the bottle on the breakfast table, and then sneaked around behind Miu.

-- Like this."

Immediately after he finished speaking, Akatsuki grabbed Miu's butt.

"Ehhh....!"

At once Miu's body shivered, and she released the glass in her hand that she had been washing.

"Oh -- careful."

Akatsuki caught the glass mid-air using his free right hand.

Akatsuki sighed, as he put the glass in the sink.

"Try to be a little more careful, okay? You could have been hurt."

"You're the one who made it dangerous!.... It's all your fault!"

"No way, your back is too appealing."

After a short pause, Akatsuki continued to say:

"Seeing the back side of a woman standing in the kitchen, it would have been impolite not to help."

While keeping his left hand on her butt, he took out his right hand from the bubbles in the sink and took the opportunity to slide it onto Miu's chest.

His aim was her raw bra-less boobs.

And massaged them.

"Umm, wait a minute -- Ahhh!"

Stuck in Akatsuki's arms, Miu tried to struggle while her sensitive breasts were being played with. He originally planned to stop right away, but Miu suddenly stopped resisting. She was halfway through with washing the dishes and her hands were covered in dish soap.

All Miu wanted was to wash her hands, however Akatsuki wouldn't allow her to succeed.

While Akatsuki held Miu, he took a few steps back, making it impossible for her to wash her hands.

Miu reached out her hands as far as they would go only to grab thin air.

"St-stop that Let me wash my hands..... "

Miu looked back at Akatsuki, and said in a sad voice.

So

"Eh.....Is that all?"

Akatsuki was slightly dumbfounded.

"I-In this situation is there something else.....?"

She wriggled shyly while lowering her red face.

"Since that is all you're concerned about....."

Akatsuki said, then continued his prank.

Then Miu started letting out some lovely reactions. Akatsuki was enjoying the distinct feeling in both his right and left hands that were willfully playing with her breasts and butt.

-- But Akatsuki was somewhat perplexed.

Akatsuki was not trying to comfort her, and certainly not trying to stop her tears.

This was just a simple prank.

So Akatsuki thought that immediately she would have fought back.

.....If you don't resist, how am I going to stop myself?

What is going on? -- Akatsuki couldn't help but wonder.

Normally Miu would have immediately stopped this prank no questions asked, and then washed her hands. Maybe with a spirited fist, an elbow to the kidneys, or a stomp on the foot with her heel.

Also, it would not have been surprising if Miu had taken a bite out of his right hand when Akatsuki reached for her chest.

However, today Miu was somewhat unusual; after finding out she couldn't wash her hands, she just gave in to Akatsuki's prank.

No matter how embarrassing the situation became, she didn't attempt to resist.

--Since the day before yesterday night, Miu started behaving like this.

She was not like her usual self.

I wonder if she ate something bad?

Or,

Does she have a fever?

While massaging Miu's oversized chest that was spilling out from his hand, Akatsuki focused his thoughts.

Through the tips of his fingers and palms he was trying to feel her body's temperature.

"Hmm, feels pretty normal."

"Ah.....Fuuuu.....Ahhh.....Fuu.....Ahhh!"

Even while enjoying her reactions, Akatsuki tilted his head.

Miu's body temperature wasn't too high.

But then again, her sensitivity in this place was still the same as before. If Akatsuki's little prank continued, Miu's body would soon produce "another kind of heat".

.....Since she doesn't have a fever, then the only possibility is.....

The day before yesterday Miu's attitude changed a little, what happened?

While avidly enjoying the feel of her soft and elastic boobs, Ousawa Akatsuki started to search his brain for the reason.

Part 3

--The morning of that day, Akatsuki went with Miu and Listy to the mall to purchase daily necessities.

Because of a conflict with two juvenile delinquents, Miu was depressed and Listy was crying. Akatsuki gently comforted the girls on the monorail.

However it was in his own special way.

Miu and Listy threw him off the monorail between stations.

Ousawa Akatsuki couldn't help but reflect upon his actions. Indeed three was too many, it should be limited to two.

But

.....Could it be?

When that though crossed Akatsuki's mind, he glanced at something out of the corner of his eyes in the kitchen.

There were dishes drying out next to the sink that caught his eye.

The day before yesterday at the mall they bought three earthenware mugs with molds of animal's faces on them.

A wolf for Akatsuki, a cat for Listy, and of course a rabbit for Miu.[\[4\]](#)

However, Miu's rabbit mug was smashed due to the trouble encountered at the mall. Even if they wanted to buy another one there was no way. The store was out of stock and that was the last rabbit mug. So Akatsuki separated himself from Miu and Listy, and persuaded the shop assistant to give him the contact information for the distributor. Although he had to forcibly purchase it from the warehouse, he bought Miu a brand new rabbit mug.

Akatsuki leaked a wry smile.

When she incidentally found the new rabbit mug on the living room table, Miu's happiness was written all over her face.

Perhaps because of that, Miu has become a little more tolerant of Akatsuki's pranks.

But

.....I just wanted to see a happy smile on her face, that was all just to satisfy my own desire.

Well, Miu now looked very pleasing to the eyes, he didn't care so much about the reason.

While countless thoughts popped into his head, Akatsuki unconsciously stopped rubbing Miu's breasts.

".....?"

The somewhat surprised Miu immediately turned around, and silently looked up at Akatsuki.

Her eyes were cloudy, and had a faraway look in them. After having her breasts and butt continuously attacked, Miu showed a small happy smile. But she did not say anything. Whether to continue or to stop is all up to Akatsuki to decide.

.....AH, she is too hard headed.

It is good to be happy about the mug, however enduring this embarrassing act as a repayment for such kindness is going too far.

.....How to let her know?

Of course, he could just tell her, but that means that Miu will have to seriously take heed of his words and not disregard them.

It seemed that action was the only way to teach her.

But who is to say that once Akatsuki stopped this prank she would still feel remorseful, and let these strange never-ending special services continue?

Exactly how to do it? The answer was already clear.

..... If turning back is useless, you can only move forward.

Never forget

He valued women feelings as the first priority as a hero -- no, as the Rogue hero.

If he took this a little more seriously, Miu immediately would not be able to endure the shamefulness.

Since Miu didn't want to fight back, he could take this opportunity to end the prank.

Then the original relationship between them will be restored. It is a flawless battle plan, almost too perfect.

Akatsuki gently smiled at Miu.

Then.....

"Ah....."

As Miu's expression appeared on her face, she lost all her strength and fell to the floor.

She probably thought Akatsuki intended to give up.

Akatsuki nodded, while showing a compassionate smile.

Mischief was restarted.

"Oh -- It's over now..... Ahhh!"

"Over? Stop talking nonsense. Isn't stopping too unfair to your body?"

Akatsuki laughed and caressed Miu intensely.

Wherever his hands touched he used Renkan Keikikou to refine the Kei in her body, creating a wave of pleasure.

"Mmm ~ "

Her breasts and buttocks were already sensitive, and now her whole body received an enhanced powerful stimulation.

An unbounded expansion of pleasure permeated her whole body.

After a few seconds --

"~Tsun ~tsu.....fu..... "

Miu just managed to remember to breathe, her whole body was limp and she had lost all of her strength.

So Akatsuki from the top down, untied her pajamas' buttons one by one.

The first one, then the second one all with his teeth. When he opened the third button, her perfectly round boobs could not wait to cast off their shackles and jump out from the pajamas.

However, there was still one button holding her breasts captive.

Under the intense pleasure, Miu's body temperature rapidly rose.

It got so high steam was rising out from her pajamas.

So

"Ah, ahhhhhhhhhhhhhh....."

After noticing the state her body was in, Miu could't help blushing.

In a moment she could see clearly.

The Kei wave made her chest flush, releasing clouds of vapor. It seemed that her insides rapidly reached their boiling point.

Akatsuki still had her increasingly tender breasts in his hands.

In order to break through Miu's limits, and totally collapse her sense of shame--

Akatsuki was willing to launch a verbal offensive.

"Feeling good enough to smoke? Those truly are some slutty boobs, eh."

"O-only, it's your fault you made my body get hotter and hotter..... I can not control myself so just ah, ahhh!"

Wave after wave of pleasure made Miu feel extremely ashamed, but it was hard to resist those feelings.

So Akatsuki gradually strengthened the offensive, until the adorable Miu rejected those excuses.

Akatsuki thought she couldn't overcome her inner feeling of shame and would eventually fight back, but she laid there weakly paralyzed in his arms. She had no desire to resist.

So

"..... Hmm, it seems this is still not enough, must be necessary for more."

Akatsuki was determined.

Currently Miu just passively allowed Akatsuki to manipulate her, but this was not the result he wanted. Now, the intensifying pleasure was only masking Miu's reasoning, and arousing her instinctual desires.

"Ah! You must not.... if you go any further.... Ahhh!"

"Do I still have to say it? Of course, this is to punish your slutty boobs, duh."

Still climbing to the highest peak, Miu trembled. Akatsuki's tone was very firm, and hard-nosed.

"Wait and see, I would like to give you a taste of what lies beyond the limits, and suffer the ultimate pleasure."

And now -- A departure bell sounded.

Leaving was the super express train to the ends of paradise via hell, the climax express. The conductor for this train was the Rogue hero.

"Are you ready? Here comes the full course meal -- the infernal massage, lick, suck, poke, twist, pinch, and pull!"

Akatsuki was also ready to use the ultimate weapon -- fresh milk

Suddenly a figure approached --

"Go to hell alone you pervert!"

When Miu was late in returning, perhaps Listy got worried and came to look for her.

Listy grabbed a nearby frying pan and hit Akatsuki on the back of his head with all her might -- One full swing.

Part 4

"Ugh.....careless, I let my guard down."

Listy Sherfied sighed "Whew".

After she made it to the kitchen just in time to stop Akatsuki's disreputable behavior, Listy helped Miu prepare some drinks and snacks. Then they prepared to return to their room on the second floor.

"S-sorry, Listy-san"

Half way up the stairs, Miu could not help but blush as she turned back to apologize.

Miu evidently heard Listy say "let my guard down" while she was taking to herself.

"Ah, n-not you.....I didn't mean to blame you Miu-chan."

Listy quickly shook her head. She wasn't accusing Miu of secretly approaching Akatsuki.

"After all, that big pervert was in the wrong."

She was staring at the back of his head when she said that.

"How can you blame me? The backside of a woman in the kitchen is a man's romantic dream."

After he perceived Listy's less friendly eyes, Akatsuki smiled nonchalantly.

"Tonight.....no, from now on when we are in the kitchen you're not allowed in."

Whatever his version of romance was, it was not true romance. The kitchen was for cooking, not flirting ...

Even in their own home they had to watch out for Akatsuki. Listy could not help but sigh, as she walked up the stairs behind Miu.

Miu walked up first holding drinks, while Listy followed holding a wooden tray full of snacks. Naturally they were both taking their time to avoid spilling anything. Then Akatsuki, who was bringing up the rear, suddenly said:

"Hey, Listy what are you wearing.....it looks like my shirt."

With a little sigh he pointed that out.

"The other day, didn't we go and buy you some pajamas?
Where are they?

"Umm....."

Oops, he noticed. The awkwardness and embarrassment made Listy's face immediately turn red -- the fact was she liked the pajamas that Akatsuki bought.

Because they were bought just for her and no one else.

Of course, she wore them a few times.

At least that night after going to the mall in the commercial district, Miu and Listy specially wore their new pajamas and staged a fashion show for Akatsuki.

However, wearing his shirts that smelled like him brought Listy an unprecedented sense of security.

For Listy who was raised in Alayzard, this is a strange and unfamiliar world. In her heart she was filled with an indescribable uneasiness. But, when she put on one of his shirts, it was as if Akatsuki was standing beside her, which gave Listy immense courage, allowing her to no longer be afraid of this world.

And today Chikage, Kuzuha, and Haruka had all come to stay at the Ouswa home.

All those girls had a very close relationship with Akatsuki and Miu.

And Listy believed that they all held some degree of feelings towards Akatsuki, considerably friendly. Because of this constraint

, the attitude of the trio towards Akatsuki was also inconveniently positive, but she felt that Ousawa Akatsuki was definitely a romantic interest for them.

Even if they didn't want to be Miu and Listy's enemies, they also hoped Akatsuki would view them in a new light. It's not like Listy didn't understand their feelings. After all Listy had experience being rejected by him once, and Miu held the same feelings.

-- She hoped that Miu will be lenient, and leave a little bit of space in Akatsuki's heart for her.

Listy felt that Chikage was a reliable person that she can depend on in this world, but at the same time she felt a little uneasy about her being a competitor over Akatsuki.

When Akatsuki returned to their world, Miu developed profound feelings for him no less than Listy's, and in a time frame that was a snap of the fingers compared to the years Listy spent with Akatsuki in Alayzard. Chikage, Kuzuha and Haruka surely had in the same way built a close relationship with Akatsuki.

Listy could not help thinking -- What about their existence was causing her so much fear?

Perhaps looking though their eyes, she saw how her past self was with Akatsuki. Thinking that, Listy could not help but feel unease. This was not the conclusion she wanted.

However, Listy once again didn't have the courage to declare "I like Akatsuki" to them either.

So as a means to tell the girls through concrete actions her feelings for Akatsuki, Listy chose -- to deliberately wear Akatsuki's shirt in front of them.

Part 5

It is a pathetic story Listy thought.

Her inner anxiety, and lack of self-confidence to not put her courage into words to express her feelings.

Even so, she still desperately insisted on advocating her position.

Her despicable desire to monopolize him. This was not how a dignified Queen should behave, and would put her reputation as Sherfied's "greatest treasure" to shame.

"....."

Listy instinctively stopped on the stairs and looked down at Akatsuki.

".....As long as you're happy, I do not care at all."

Maybe he sensed Listy's embarrassment, Akatsuki seamlessly remarked in passing.

".....Really?"

Listy felt the tenderness in his words and she turned back ahead. Then Akatsuki unabashedly laughed:

"Oh, do you not know? A woman wearing nothing underneath but his t-shirt is also a man's romantic dream. And from this angle -- there is a clear picture of your panties."

"-!"

As expected she could never let her guard down. Listy quickly removed one of her hands from the tray that had the snacks on it, trying to cover her butt.

"All your romance is perverted nonsense!"

She lifted her right foot and was about to kick backwards at that moment.

But

"Wow, that was dangerous."

It would have been easily avoided by Akatsuki.

"Ah... ... Wo wo woooooooooo!"

She lost her balance and wobbled on the stairs.

-- Careful."

Akatsuki stuck out both his hands to support Listy's body -- All ten of his fingers grabbed Listy's butt.

"Eeehhhh! You, you why did you put your hands there!"

"No, this is surly just a reflex.....a man's instinct is really scary."

"The really scary thing are the evil thoughts in your head right now!"

Listy was trying to escape from Akatsuki's grasp.

"Hey, don't move around. This is very dangerous."

Akatsuki said so, as he took a few steps forward to right beneath Listy and moved his hands up and down.

"Ah"

Listy felt her body float into the air.

He leaned back and used his knee as a fulcrum to lift her up into his arms -- the so-called princess carry.

"You"! P...put me down!"

Listy instinctively twisted her body bashfully.

"I can't let you down since the staircase is too narrow. The snacks might spill, and that would be bad. So, let me carry you up the stairs. Just make the best of it."

"Umm..... well, okay then."

Listy reluctantly did as he said.

"Listy-san, are you okay?"

Miu stopped ahead of them on the stairs, and anxiously looked back.

"Yeah, I'm fine.....it just surprised me, sorry."

A little red in the face Listy nodded.

"Well.....we arrived."

He carried Listy to the second floor, and gently put her down on the floor.

Listy quickly fixed the shirt she was wearing.

"Umm.....Th-Thank you."

"Don't mention it. Hurry back, Izumi and the others are waiting for you."

While saying that Akatsuki opened the door of his room.

"Ah, yes. It's rude to let our guests wait too long."

Miu echoed.

".....I guess it's almost time to conclude things."

Listy muttered. In a very weak voice, that Akatsuki and Miu could barely hear.

".....Listy-san?"

"No, nothing, I'm fine... ... Okay, let's go."

She felt Miu's suspicious glance, and quickly shook her head, exposing a guilty smile.

"Oh..... --- Huh?"

Suddenly, it seemed that Miu had noticed something about her body as she turned around.

To be precise -- about the lower part of her body.

"Eh ? What's the matter, Miu-chan?"

"Umm... ... If I'm wrong, please don't be offended."

Miu looked a little uncomfortable as she responded to Listy cautiously.

"Listy-san, Down there probably....."

"Down there? What's wrong down there?"

Listy, unaware of what happened, looked down at her feet.

"No, umm....I didn't mean that. Down there... ... what are you wearing?"

".....Eh?"

For a moment she didn't understand what Miu meant.

..... Huh?

And then she finally noticed that her lower body seemed to be exceptionally cool starting from a little while ago. It was exhilarating free, no restraint at all.

So

"....."

Listy stood there silently, and slid her hands down Akatsuki's shirt that she was wearing instead of pajamas.

"....."

Her palms slowly moved around, smoothly.

Upon confirming that there was no distinct boundary where the fabric and skin meet --

"....."

An ominous glint was on Listy's face as she jerked her head around.

"Good night! and try not to stay up too late."

Akatsuki said as he was about to enter his room.

He had a bath towel draped over both shoulders, and just a pair of shorts on.

At first glance, there seemed no place to put it.

However in one of the pockets a small piece of pink fabric stuck out. Listy suddenly realized that beyond a doubt, it was when he picked her up for the princess carry --

But, before Listy could say something, Akatsuki was already in his room.

And "Click" the door was locked.

"....."

"....."

Listy stood there in the hallway speechless. Miu also stood beside her awkwardly silent, not knowing what to say next. They both stood there quietly in the hallway.

"....."

Listy silently walked in front of his room.

After knocking the door twice, she then tried to open the door with no regard for an answer.

"Gachin"[\[5\]](#)

However, the door was locked from the inside. It wouldn't budge.

So

".....Umm, Listy-san?"

".....Open the door."

After Listy asked in a low voice, she took a deep breath, and with a power that could break the world record for spirometry:

"You, you perverted freak--! Open the door right now!"

Then she started hitting and pounding on the door. Her face turned red as she shouted herself hoarse.

Akatsuki was still unresponsive. Then in an attempt to kick down the door she raised her right leg.

"N-no you can't Listy-san! You will be completely exposed!"

Miu yelled aloud in a hurry.

"~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~!"

Without any other options, she bit down on her lower lip, while bitterly glaring at Akatsuki's door.

It was the middle of the night and at the risk of disturbing the neighbors, Listy Sherfied snapped and shouted:

"Just you wait and see! Tomorrow then, when you walk out of your room it will be your reckoning!"

Part 6

Akatsuki never attempted to open the door, leaving Listy in the hallway sans underwear. She had no choice but to go back to the room where Chikage and the others were waiting.

"Lets go Miu-chan."

"Er, umm.....no problem."

Miu nodded with a solemn expression, and cleared throat a few times "Ehem".

"Oh, sorry to keep you waiting ~"

Regaining her composure, Miu spoke while coming inside.

"-----"

Listy followed behind Miu, tightly glued to her back.

Then.....

"Oh, welcome back. We waited for you guys."

Chikage said so while greeting them with a smile. She had on a combination of a camisole and frayed hot pants. This was apparently what Chikage wears when she goes to bed.

Next to her Kuzuha had on her pajamas, and Haruka had on her JPN Babel uniform next to her.

"Did something happen just now? I heard a terrible scream."

"I think I heard Ousawa Akatsuki's name -- by any chance did that man do something?"

"No, no, it was nothing..... really it's true."

Miu flailed her hands around as she responded to their questions, trying to attract all of their attention to herself.

"Look, I got you guys some drinks. Everyone must be thirsty, right?"

She put the drinks on the table after saying so.

"-!"

Taking advantage of this chance, Listy casually headed towards her dresser against the wall.

"....."

She pretend as if nothing had happened as she nonchalantly opened her underwear drawer.

After she grabbed a pair of panties she rapidly rolled it into a ball, and pushed the drawer closed.

-- Oh no, I prepared snacks but I forgot to bring the tray up."

Miu seamlessly created a perfect opportunity for Listy.

So

"Oh - that's unfortunate Miu-chan - I can go get it for you - no really - I will do it - I don't mind at all -"

Listy completed the lines they prepared in one breath without stopping for punctuation. Then she immediately left the room.

As soon as the door closed behind her she quickly put on the newly acquired underwear, and sighed after finally being able to relax a little. She then picked up the snack tray they left in the hallway.

.....One, two, three

To not make it look unnatural she calculated in her mind how much time it would take to go the first floor, and head back to the room --

"Found it. This is it, right Miu-chan?"

She returned to the room while forcing a natural smile on her face.

"W-wow Thank you Listy-san."

"Ah, don't mention it."

Miu gave her a somewhat stiff smile. Listy then went to sit between Chikage and her.

.....Whew, I somehow got through it.

She now clearly felt the softness of the fabric around her legs, but around her butt she didn't have a similar feeling. She couldn't set aside a lingering feeling as she felt her chest tighten.

".....Huh?"

Chikage remarked. Listy frowned. She noticed Chikage was looking at the hem of Akatsuki's shirt, which she was wearing instead of pajamas, and that her new pair of underwear was partly visible.

.....She has really sharp eyes... ...!

Listy turned pale, a face fit for her hopeless situation.

Although she had barely managed to find the same color panties, Chikage must have noticed the style was different from the ones she wore earlier.

However Chikage,

"Wow.....this is delicious. Is this a new item they have at the convenience store?"

Chikage did not mention the change, instead she talked about a entirely different topic.

She definitely noticed -- and was likely to have imagined many things.

Listy was thankful from the bottom of her heart for Chikage's consideration.

So -- in her heart she hoped that these kind of pleasant conversations could go on forever. She thought of how good it would have been if that were possible.

"____"

Listy took a deep breath, and made a serious face.

"..... Please listen to me."

In a quiet.....but yet powerful tone she called out to attract everybody's attention.

Waiting until they all focused on her, Listy looked at the three: Chikage, Kuzuha, and Haruka.

And then asked a question.

"A little while ago, I asked you three something and wanted you to think about when I left the room -- Did all three of you come up with an answer yet?"

Part 7

"The thing you asked.....?"

Miu wasn't there and had no idea what Listy was talking about. All she could do was stare blankly at her and ask about it.

Once she perceived the seriousness in the atmosphere, Miu no longer pressed the issue. It also seemed that Listy had no intention of repeating herself.

The three girls faces became very serious.

While silently waiting for their answers, Miu turned her gaze towards the three in question who all had serious expressions on their faces.

-- Ousawa-san, after you left the room to get the drinks, Listy-san asked us something."

On behalf of the other two girls, Kuzuha explained the situation to Miu.

"After leaving Alayzard and coming to live in this world with you and Ousawa-kun -- Listy-san doesn't want her existence to become a burden to the both of you. In the end she wants to

enhance her power, or her being here will become a liability. And--"
"

Kuzuha paused for a moment.

"If she is only going to be a burden, she won't hesitate to return to Alayzard....."

"H-how could you think of doing that!"

Miu watched as Listy panicked and turn away from her.

"....."

Listy remained silent as she dropped her head down with an unusually serious face. Miu fully understood that this was not a joke.

Ah.....could it be that.....

Miu suddenly thought back to the conversation they had in the hallway.

It seemed like Listy muttered something like "time to conclude things" before they returned to the room. At the time she thought she misheard her, but apparently that wasn't the case.

However, Ousawa Miu still didn't understand.

"How could you say such a thing? In the park just the other day, didn't we agree from now on to be together forever? And at that time Listy-san agreed, right?"

"Yes, at the time when Miu-chan said that to me..... to be honest , I was really moved. Akatsuki brought me to this world and you were willing to accept me But--"

Listy looked up.

"Because Akatsuki and Miu-chan are too close to me.....you may be biased. So I wanted to hear the objective opinions of these three."

"There was no need to go through the trouble.....whether it is Chikage-san, Class Rep, or Haruka-san we all hope that you stay!"

Miu couldn't help but raise her voice.

"I thought that's how you'd feel..... emotionally that is, but that's not the answer I want."

Listy showed a lonely smile.

"I don't want a sentimental answer, rather I want everyone to judge if my strength will be any help. In short, when you balance it on a scale -- to which side will it tilt?"

"It's not like --"

Listy didn't have to be concerned about this issue as long as she continued to be near Akatsuki's side. Just like himself -- however, there was not enough time to finish, before Listy cut in.

"I just didn't want to be a burden to everyone."

Listy sighed.

"My coming to this world should have been detected by Babel. If I am unable to explain my presence here, won't it lead to exposing Miu-chan's true identity? It won't just be me who will have to pay the price. I fear that not only will Akatsuki and Miu-chan, but the others will also be in danger. In that case, I might as well--"

"It might be better.....if you just go back to Alayzard?"

Miu asked the question with a look of blank amazement, Listy nodded as to say "Yes".

"I already know that creating a hole in the dimension is a way to travel between different worlds. Moreover I'm the same as Miu-chan, as in we are both from Alayzard and our very nature points back there. Just like how everyone came to Alayzard in order to prevent war using the same method I alone can go back to Alayzard."

"It is so, but!"

Miu understood her feelings of not wanting to trouble Akatsuki.

And in theory, it won't be impossible for her to go back to Alayzard alone.

But

"I'm not going to promise.....to let Listy-san return to Alayzard alone."

Ousawa Miu was adamant, and was not going to compromise.

On that day, when the both of them went downtown shopping with Akatsuki, on their way back they stopped off at a park and Listy cried. She snuggled up to Miu's chest, her shoulders were trembling and tears were streaming down her cheeks.

At that time, I said something to Listy.

It was something like, "There is nothing to worry about, because that person is with us -- you will never have to leave".

That's right, I'm certain I said that.

That wasn't said just because it was a spur of the moment kind of thing, absolutely not. Those words were in no way half-hearted.

So.....

".....What does everyone else think.....?"

Miu looked at Chikage, Kuzuha, and Haruka. The trust in them could be seen in her eyes.

Even if they thought Listy would only become a burden to everyone --

She would never leave her.

The first of the three to change her expression was Chikage. Her serious look transformed into a relaxed smile.

"Listy-san, because you asked us so seriously.....and to not be rude, we each considered it seriously for a long time. And then we also exchanged our views with each other, but --"

She paused for a moment.

-- I'm sorry."

"....."

When she heard Chikage say that, Listy bowed in silence.

"How can....."

It was unbelievable what she just heard. Miu let out a heartbreakin voice.

It was at that time --

..... Ah

A small hand grabbed Miu's palms. The small hand didn't come from Listy who was next to her -- but from the person sitting opposite of her, Kuzuha. Looking up, Kuzuha gave her a quiet smile. And the warmth that passed through her hand told her -- there was nothing to worry about.

Miu decided to remain silent and leave this matter to her trusted friends.

So

-- Yes, I'm quite sorry."

Haruka said with a stiff face.

"That I worried Listy-san so much, I was waiting until it was all over before telling you..... when we got back Ousawa Akatsuki came to me so we could decide together how to report your presence to Babel. This was my fault."

"I, I didn't mean I was just afraid that everyone was over straining themselves for me."

Listy was somewhat flustered as she tried to refute Haruka's opinion.

"There's no difference, you felt uneasy and thought you were causing us all trouble. I was one who made you feel that way. It was all because of my incompetence you were so distressed."

"No, you can't say that. The problem was all because of me in the first place."

"If you say that, then isn't it Akatsuki's fault since he brought Miu to this world to begin with? No, it's better to blame Akatsuki for being summoned to Alayzard?"

"Ousawa-kun was born into this world, maybe that itself was the mistake."

"Haha, you're right.....that really was the biggest problem."

Kuzuha's malicious teasing amused Chikage enough to laugh.

"Hey -- Listy-san, do you think the root cause of all the trouble is because you and Miu met Akatsuki? or is the root cause his very existence?"

"I, I....."

Confronted with Chikage inquiry, Listy was confused and looked at Miu.

It was not like she didn't want to express her thoughts, it was just that she didn't want to take responsibility in the matter.

Chikage shed her wry smile for a serious one.

"You know Listy-saneveryone here has helped or burden someone else in some shape or way -- that is, the pluses and minuses on the scales vary depending on each situation. We might be able to help Akatsuki and Miu sometimes, and other times we might become a burden to them. The anxiety that you're feeling doesn't just belong to Listy-san alone. We also feel the same way. Even so, we still want to stay together with each other, contributing as much as possible to Akatsuki and to Miu. We will do whatever we can. I believe Listy-san basically has the same idea Or am I thinking too much?"

".....No."

Listy shook her head, Chikage suddenly showed a satisfied smile, "that was easy".

"I thought that's how it was. Say, Listy-san in your view you considered yourself a burden and wanted everyone to abandon you. If that's the case then if someone else ever becomes a burden should we abandon them once again? I don't think that's right. Although, under certain circumstances I think it is a necessary evil to cut ties --"

Chikage face was very serious.

-- However, for Listy-san to completely cut ties on behalf of Miu so she can have a place in this world, and to assist Akatsuki in his ideals. I'm afraid that we need to make the whole world our enemy. This is going to be a daunting task, and will take enormous resolution and awareness. I believe that it is possible for Akatsuki, since I have decided to fight alongside him. For that, absolute trust is necessary."

"Yes.....I think so too."

Haruka also nodded and:

"If I continue to stay in Student Council, then I should be able to safely obtain various pieces of useful information. However, this practice of being a double agent really would be impossible with

my personality and I feel that I owe the student council more than that. When that time comes I can't guarantee that I won't become a burden to everyone --"

After a short pause

"So tomorrow, I have decided to turn in my resignation -- to resolve any doubts in my mind. With that, I will no longer be able to gather information from the Student Council. Admittedly my action is will be detrimental to us, however now I can fight side by side with everyone without any misgivings. I'm sure that I can become a big addition to the team."

"In fact....you also don't have to worry so much, we figured you would do that."

Kuzuha continued.

"Listy-san is our friend and we want you to stay here with us..... It's that simple. After all, you want to stay with us even if that means becoming an enemy of the entire world, if you can't cherish a person like that than who? Those are the kind of people I want to be friends with, and fight shoulder to shoulder with. This should be a very natural way of thinking."

Then, she turned to look at an empty space, as if remembering a past memory.

--Ousawa-kun once said 'When a woman wants to cry but is not able to cry, the world is simply wrong'. By the same token, we would find it impossible to smile, if Ousawa-kun and Listy-san

cannot smile from the bottom of their hearts in this world. Something must have gone wrong. If Listy-san ends up deciding to return to Alayzard it will undoubtedly take away everyone's smile. "

Wasn't that it?

"Because we can't forget the sacrifices Listy-san made for us....."

"But, if....."

"Listy-san intends to temporarily return to Alayzard until Akatsuki and Miu in solve their problems in this world, and then come back?"

Listy tried to rebut Kuzuha's claim, but Chikage saw through her thinking first.

"That certainly might be a way, but so is Listy-san staying with us to support Akatsuki and Miu even if only a little. If we become discouraged or likely to give up, we should all encourage each other, and forge ahead together through any future challenges. Don't you want to do that also?"

Chikage continued with a calm smile.

"Listy-san wants us to put emotion aside for the time being, in fact we are eager to confirm your feelings, and not just for Akatsuki's sake. We must know if we are willing to put our lives on the line for each other. I at least can't always hide under Akatsuki's protective umbrella. If Listy-san wishes to stay, and if

one of us has a crisis, surely together we can help to alleviate the burden on Akatsuki. There is the possibility of extra points for all of us."

".....I should stay? Is that really okay?"

Listy said with a disbelieving tone.

"I can't think of anything better. Even if Listy-san went back to Alayzard, Ousawa-kun would soon bring you back again. Even if he needs to use unscrupulous means, he won't hesitate."

Kuzuha shrugged.

"Once he decides to do something, no one can change his mind. Listy-san.....you should also know his personality, right?"

She said while smiling wryly because:

"I believe this is also the reason why you can't help but fall in love with Ousawa-kun."

".....uh, yeah.....!"

Listy nodded while exposing a face that went from crying to smiling.

Upon seeing how fast things got off track, Chikage let out a long sigh.

-- Ah. Umm, this is our conclusion. What do you think, Miu?"

She responded with a gentle smile.

So

"Yeah, thank youyou guys really are good people."

Miu thanked all three of them from the bottom of her heart.

Then she turned around to Listy sitting next to her, and gently hugged her.

"Miu-chan.....?"

Listy was taken aback.

"I'd like to say it again.... ... No, I'll say it a few times, it doesn't matter."

Ousawa Miu's tone was serious.

"Everything will be all right for Listy-san and myself. The same for Chikage-san, Class Rep, Haruka-san -- also that person, because we are all together."

See?

"No matter when, no matter where, we will always be together."

"..... Ah, yestogether forever sorry I'm sorry"

Miu embraced her tighter while gently patting her back. Listy returned the hug.

"Sniff, don't cry so much Listy-san, otherwise --"

Her statement was interrupted by a sudden knock on the door.

"..... Huh?"

They were all surprised.

"Ohhh... ... sorry, didn't mean to interrupt."

Akatsuki's voice came through the door.

Miu and the others instinctively looked at each other.

"Uh, is something the matter.....?"

Miu responded on behalf of the others, wanting him to answer from outside the room.

"Ah, it's probably just me being paranoid.....but I feel like someone is crying."

It was just as Miu imagined — strictly speaking, this should not have come as a surprise.

"-!"

Everyone in the room unintentionally laughed very loudly.

Even Listy who had tears until just a second ago was no exception.

..... Ah.

This was exactly why everyone liked Akatsuki.

Ousawa Miu thought, at this moment, we all are together.

'You're laughing too much, you guys.....or is it just my misconception after all?'

Akatsuki said "good night" and was about to leave:

"Not at all.....thank you for worrying."

While Miu gently wiped away the tears in the corner of her eyes with a smile, they all spoke at the same time:

"..... Good night."

Miu raised her voice.

At the same time, she added in her heart -- I love you.

Part 8

Akatsuki's appearance caused them to break out into laughter.

It was a while before they were able to change to other topics.

The heavy atmosphere a little while ago disappeared without a trace. The small room was now brimming with a bright and festive atmosphere.

"Hehe.....that was really funny."

At the same time Miu said so she pulled on the neckline of her pajamas, gently fanning herself.

Maybe she got a little too excited and laughed too much, since Miu's body felt hot like she was in an oven. However, it seemed excessive for her body temperature to be this high from just that.

Moreover.

..... Strange Why does it feel as though I'm floating.....?

The excitement must be from all these uplifting feelings.

"Hey.....this smell is....?"

Suddenly, a sweet fragrance filled the room.

The phytoncide aroma of flowers settled in the air, which had an exceptionally calming effect on the mind.

"Oh, I brought a small bottle of essential oils over today, its aroma is good for relaxation.

Chikage uncovered the mystery behind the aroma.

"They sell this all over the special autonomous region to help with stress. After all, there are a lot of people who found it painful being summoned to a different world. Furthermore when they get back they are forced to live on the artificial island just adding to their stress. There are so many goodies I obtained for relaxation

and stress, some of which also have added magical effects. This too is one of them."

"So"

Miu took a deep breath, to enjoy the sweet smell.

It was a delightful aroma, but

.....it feels like it's getting hotter fast.....ah.

Miu untied her pajamas' first and second buttons to let the cool air in, then fanned her chest with the slack, pulling it back and forth.

The air came in contact with her flushed body.

Rather than a feeling like a cooling breeze, it was more like a pleasant tickle.

When Miu looked up, she suddenly noticed that Listy, Kuzuha, and Haruka were all similarly cooling themselves off with their hands or the hems of their pajamas. Out of everyone, Haruka's attire gave the impression that she would be the most uncomfortable.

"Umm Haruka-san, did you not bring pajamas?"

Miu couldn't resist asking her.

"Yes..... but it shouldn't be a problem."

Haruka answered.

"Oh.....this might be a good idea."

As she said that, she lifted up her hand with the AD.

Then -- the particles of light changed her uniform into a pair of light pastel colored pajamas.

"Eh? Amazing.....how did you do that?"

That was the first time Listy saw an AD transform like that, and she was unable to hide her inner curiosity.

"This is the newly designed school uniform woven from telepathic stone fibers. It functions similarly to our ADs, which can materialize our weapons, since they are made out of the same material. Before I was able to transform my uniform or gym clothes to my combat clothes but....."

Haruka was explaining the technology of this world.

"Depending on the user's personality traits the AD automatically changes into the most appropriate weapon for the user. By applying this function to the uniforms it now is possible to changed into a wide variety of clothing to suit the time and place....."

"Oh..... It sounds fairly convenient."

Chikage said.

"If I remember correctly, at the end of spring break it will be time for the new term to start. So we should get them then?"

"That is the schedule. However, today I have brought everyone's new uniforms and ADs. Do you want to try it out?"

"I appreciate the thought, but....."

Kuzuha had a somewhat complicated expression.

"I was skipped ahead. The uniforms have to be custom-made for my size.....I wonder if it will be all right."

"That's not a problem either."

Haruka smiled.

"Just a moment ago I explained how the new uniform automatically changes to the user's individual characteristics. Of course that also includes size. Probably the only drawback is its durability. Every time you change the telepathic stone fibers wear down."

While saying that Haruka took out the sets of the uniforms and ADs from her knapsack.

"Wow, Thank you Haruka-san" "

Next to her Miu received the uniform and AD, then said her thanks.

"Eh.....there's one for me?"

Listy responded with rounded eyes, showing her surprise.

"Yes. It is only natural..... since from now on, you are going to be a fellow companion."

Haruka said with a smile.

"As soon as the admission formalities are completed you are going to be a student the same as us. You just have to wait a little bit before the start of the new term, so please be patient about it."

"Thank you.....I am really so happy."

Happy from the bottom of her heart, Listy tightly hugged the uniform handed to her.

"After that, all I have to do is hand Ousawa Akatsuki his uniform. Because of a special exception, he was already given his new model of AD. Can you give him the uniform tomorrow?"

"Not a problem.....Thank you Haruka-san."

Miu took Akatsuki's uniform and put it on top of her dresser in the closet along with hers.

"That....."

When she went to ask if she should put hers away along with the other two, the look in Listy's eyes told her 'don't! However

Listy refused with a gentle smile as she shook her head. Apparently she was very happy to get a uniform, and it seemed like she wanted to embrace it for a while longer.

So Miu consented with a nod, and returned to where she was sitting.

Part 9

Haruka's pajamas problems were resolved.

As for the remaining problem --

..... Why is it so hot

Miu simply pulled on the collar of her pajamas, "Patapa" as she vigorously fanned.

Then.....

"Ah, after coming here today I've been curious....."

Kuzuha stared straight at Miu.

"Ousawa-san has your chest... ... gotten bigger?"

"Ugh....."

When Miu heard what was said, her hands stopped fanning her chest.

"H-has it? Must just be your imagination, hahaha."

In spite of herself she let out a dry laugh.

"Is it? --Let me see."

Chikage immediately circled behind Miu's back, and with both hands she massaged Miu's breasts.

"AhCh-Chikage-san don't do that!"

Miu instinctively protested.

"Whoa, they really did get bigger.....! Considerably larger!"

Chikage said while her hands continued to rub Miu's chest back and forth.

"Compared to when we were in Alayzard the size is completely different than what it was at the hot springs we went to bathe for at least most of the time. You almost can't hold them in your hand anymore. This is called an "unruly" or "uncontrollable" chest."

"S-such praise doesn't make me happy....."

Miu squirmed, trying to break free from Chikage's grasp.

Then Chikage said with a laugh:

"However on the other hand.....it seems it's not just Miu's body that changed.

"W-what does that mean?"

Haruka found Chikage's malicious gaze directed at herself, she suddenly shrank back while blushing.

"The vice-president loves to crack jokes..... you know what I mean."

"Ah, yeah. While in Alayzard the size of my chest did increase a little, and there have been changes in my body's curves....."

Chikage's could resist teasing, but Haruka had honestly confessed to her own changes.

"Yes indeed.... But then again, I'm not just talking about you two."

Chikage paused for a moment.

"Not to be outdone by both of you, but Class Rep and I have also had changes in our figures. Like the vice-president have become more feminine than I was. As for Class Rep, well it seems that all of us are not quite the same"

After seeing all of them sizing up her bodies. Chikage with a mischievous smile watched Kuzuha doing the same beside her.

"Eh, really?"

"....."

Miu involuntarily spoke, causing Kuzuha to fall silent and become disappointed in the thought. It was just as Chikage said, but she does not want to admit though.

Going by Kuzuha's reaction, Miu thought that perhaps she put on a little weight and should apologize.

"No, Class Rep is fine..... Actually I didn't even notice the changes in your body, so you don't need to worry about it."

Miu was trying to comfort her, but it never occurred to her it would have the opposite effect.

"You did not notice at all ...? There is no need to worry ...?"

Along with surprisingly low voice she never heard from her, Kuzuha stared at Miu with murderous intent in her eyes.

".....!"

"Umm..... Cl-Class Rep.....?"

Miu timidly asked Kuzuha, who was quietly mumbling to herself with her head down.

Have I inadvertently stepped on a landmine of Kuzuha's?

Then, Kuzuha suddenly looked up and:

"I shrunk! Compared to last year's body measurement I'm even shorter!"

"Oh, is that sobut there is no need to worry."

Listy tried to comfort Kuzuha.

"With height, there is a certain error margin based on your physical condition for that day."

"..... Five centimeters."



".....What?"

"I shrunk five centimeters. It is completely outside the range of any error margin!"

"Umm, that....."

Feeling the awkwardness Miu's line of sight began to waver.

There was no way that a five centimeter difference could be called an error.

The reason why she failed to notice was probably because they they saw each other every day, and the change was a little bit at a time.

.....What do I do?

She couldn't find the words to comfort her. However then, Miu had a flash of inspiration.

"No, it's still fine Class Rep since it's only five centimeters..... because."

She took a breath.

"After I came to this world my bust has increased about ten centimeters!"

"....."

".....Huh?"

She looked back as for some reason Kuzuha fell to the floor.

When Miu caught sight of Kuzuha she could almost see a 'Boom' sound effect left behind. To her side Listy wasn't much better.

"..... Ten centimeters."

"Eh? Li, Listy-san?"

Listy muttered to herself as she held the new uniform closer to her chest and raised her legs up bringing her knees together. The upper half of her body started to involuntary shake and sway.

"Oh, is this what happens when the speaker has no realization of what she is saying? This is scary and cruel....."

Chikage couldn't help but smile wryly.

"Oh well, when it comes down to it, the body of everyone here has changed in some shape or way. I mean there is a common point between all five of us."

"....."

"....."

"....."

"....."

Chikage's words caused the other four, including Miu to fall silent.

It went without saying what common point the five of them had

"At the very least we don't have to worry about team chemistry problems."

Chikage made a very bright smile.

"They say when a woman falls in love she becomes the most beautiful. But the truth is that because their female hormones intensify they become more concerned with how others will view them. Therefore when you're beside the person you like, and the person you like is looking at you, you naturally become the most beautiful."

Chikage took a look at Miu's chest.

"In fact massaging your breasts to make them bigger is not an urban legend, and there is a scientific basis for it. By letting the person you like caress your body both the body and the mind will feel an unmatched pleasure. Stimulating the mammary gland to secrete large amounts of female hormones. When that person is looking, the heart's longing for them is even greater and the thought of being touched by them is somewhere in mind. When this deep psychological phenomenon happens regularly it will cause the body to unconsciously react."

"I, I don't want that person to touch any part of me!"

Desperately Miu tried to deny it, but on the other side of her Listy coldly stated:

"..... Liar."

"H-how am I a liar?"

Miu hastily look at her, but Listy deliberately averted her gaze before letting it slip:

"A few days ago on the tramand not long ago the kitchen"

"Uwwaaaaaaaaaa."

Miu jumped up to cover Listy's mouth with her hands. "Well well". Upon seeing this, Chikage laughed and came over to smooth things out.

"Actually, what I mean to say is very simple -- and of course, this is a hypothesis only. I think the changes in our bodies come from our subconscious based on the image of ourselves we want Akatsuki to see. Our subconscious projections are actually causing physical changes."

Paused for a moment

"Based on that, why don't we just name it the "Ousawa Akatsuki syndrome"."

"....."

"....."

"....."

"....."

Chikage's naming left the other four speechless.

"What should I do..... it seems like I caught a very serious disease."

Terror struck the room as it fell into absolute silence, only Chikage was overjoyed.

"Calm down, you don't have to fear it so much. It might not be that bad for your body. Perhaps it's just because we are around Akatsuki and it's just a natural change in our bodys' Ki. Just like how Miu from the bottom of her heart hopes that Akatsuki will caressed her breasts. She wants to attract his attention so subconsciously she is making her breasts grow --"

Then Chikage gave an wicked smile to Kuzuha.

"The desire deep inside Class Rep if for Akatsuki to see her as a little sister.....naturally she will gradually shrink."

"-Eh!?"

Kuzuha was already bright red, but now her face become even redder in that moment.

"I, I, Izumi, what do you mean? I don't want that."

"Don't get angry at me this is merely a hypothesis. It also a reasonable explanation for why the Vice-President and I's bodies are becoming more feminine. This mainly comes from our hopes that Akatsuki will see us as true women."

"You don't have the right to decide another person's feelings..... I don't feel that way!"

--Also when you and Akatsuki came back from the Sherfied peace negotiations along with Miu, it seemed to have been the start of the changeCan you remember what Akatsuki did, or what changed in your heart? Any deep psychological change is an acceptable answer."

"Uhh....."

Haruka found herself at a loss for words. Her face was flushed when she bashfully looked at Miu.

.....No, don't look at me! I don't want to be dragged under the water with you!

In her mind Miu screamed.

"So ah"

Chikage alternately looked away from Haruka to where Haruka's eyes were pointing, Miu, with a strange grin on her face.

It looks as though she had noticed something was amiss.

.....Wah, I'd rather die than say anything.....!

Miu tightly pursed her lips, exercising her right to remain silent. Nothing she can say would make her open her mouth.

In any event, it's not possible for anyone to know about the legendary "search for moles" incident that happened at Melissa's brothel.

"Why so nervous?..... I have no intention of getting to the bottom of what happened after the earthenware mug was broken."

Chikage smiled.

"The last one left is just Listy-san."

"Eh.....me?"

Listy stared blankly as Chikage nodded and smiled, and slowly walked over to her side.

"I heard that before Sherfied reclaimed its capital and you were made Queen you used to travel together with Akatsuki. During that time Listy-san was praised as the "Treasure of Sherfied", right?"

"Well"

Listy certainly understood what Chikage was hinting at. Chikage smiled, and whispered in her ear:

"You traveled for a long time together, naturally from morning till night. Then, it can't be helped if you become aware..... Listy-san must have been particularly beautiful, right?"

"-!"

Listy suddenly reddened, too embarrassed she buried her face in between her knees.

So

After teasing everyone one after another, Chikage was perfectly content and stood up.

"This is only my hypothesis, there is no need to take it too seriously. Maybe the changes in our secondary sex characteristics really has no direct relationship with Akatsuki, nothing else but just that..... Well, I cannot really explain why Class Rep shrunk five centimeters, or why Miu's breasts grew ten centimeters. Perhaps -- Miu's breasts are absorbing all the growth hormone from Class Rep!"

After hearing Chikage's joke, Miu let out a big sigh.

"Come on, how would such a thing be possible. Class Rep, you said it, right? "

"....."

"Cl-Class Rep..... ?"

Kuzuha silently stared at Miu, with empty eyes that could cause you to tremble with fear.

"Ah, so actually.....it turned out to be the case"

Upon saying that, Kuzuha stood up, and slowly walked towards Miu. It appeared that her body lost all of its spirit. She was swaying from side to side like a walking corpse.

Part 10

"Cl-Class Rep.....settle down a little bit. We can talk this out, you don't have to get so close."

Kuzuha stopped an arms length in front of her, Miu barely squeezed out a small smile. Kuzuha had an ominous glint in her eyes, almost sharp enough to kill a person.

".....Hmph."

She snorted, before shoving Miu's shoulders back, pushing her down to the floor

"That hurts..... What are you doing -- wah, Class Rep! Why are you getting on top of me?"

Miu raised her voice in protest. Kuzuha with an absolutely godlike tone responded:

"Too noisy, shut up! Is it possible to be quite for a bit, you dairy cow!"

After she bitterly spit out the sentence, Kuzuha mercilessly ravaged Miu's breasts.

"There must be something strange, how can they keep getting bigger and bigger? Breasts are no more than lumps of fat. How dare you steal my height. That is unforgivable!"

"Hiaaaaaaaaaaaaa! Class, Class Rep, what the hell are you doing?"

Miu twisted her body desperately to try and escape from Kuzuha's violation.

But, Kuzuha sat straddled on top of her making it impossible for her to run away.

"I just want to recover my height you stole from me. You had better be good for a little while and stop resisting. If not every time we run into each other, either in school or privately, I'll going to call you "Oppai-san"!"

"Awful, your going too far to make fun of someone else's body! You absolutely can't call me Oppai-san, otherwise I'm going to cry!"

The moment Miu began to cried out, suddenly a knock came at the door.

"Hey, just a moment ago did someone mention "cry"?"

"Uwaaaa! No, no, nobody said such a thing. You must have got it wrong!"

Miu quickly yelled, trying to drive away Akatsuki.

This wasn't a joke. If by any chance Akatsuki saw what was happening in the room, I don't want to think how bad the situation would get.



"Class Rep your acting too abnormal. You have to snap out of it, hey!"

After saying that, Miu turned to Chikage for help.

"What the hell is going on? Chikage-san.....is this because of the essential oil?"

"Ah.....well, everyone rarely gets together like this, so I want to use the oil to take the edge off a little and help us share our feelings with each other. I may have mixed a few things in to elevate our moods, improve blood circulation, and dull our thinking, but...."

"That would mean? "

"Umm ... Although there is no alcohol in it -- it has a similar effect."

"What similar effect! Can't you see how drunk the Class Rep is?"

Its already reached the level of a drunken frenzy.

"This is your responsibility Chikage-san! Hurry up and do something about it!"

"This unpleasantness.....I'm sorry, Miu."

In comparison to Miu's utter discomfort, Chikage was laughing happily for some reason:

"To tell the truth -- I actually like to watch girls be affectionate with each other."

"I know all about your hobbies, but why did you pick here and now to flare-up?"

Well, Chikage was useless. That means I'm on my own to solve this somehow.

However, Miu was a bit tipsy herself, and urgently needed to find a way to shake her off. However, she doesn't have the power in her hands and feet to push Kuzuha off. Plus with her chest being rubbed by Kuzuha, left her even more powerless.

"Listy-san, Haruka-san! Stop staring over there, and come and help me!"

Listy was still sitting here rocking back and forth, suddenly lifted up her head.

"Your life is none of my business.....you dairy cow!"

"Uhh, waaah! I haven't done anything to make to make you this angry! Please let it go, no I'm begging you to!"

When Listy averted her face with a "humph" she had to give up on her, Miu turned her eyes to Haruka as her last hope.

"Oh, I'm sorry this is the first time I've witnessed such an exciting scene, so"

Haruka had both hands covering her red face, and secretly glanced through the gaps of the fingers.

"No, no, that's not right! The things we did with that person in brothel was way more provocative than this -- definitely a hundred times more!"

"Ah right, Ousawa Akatsuki has done more exciting to us... ... ~!"

Recalling the events from that night, Haruka suddenly froze, unable to move a single step.

"Ugh Haruka-san ? Hello? Hey! Uwa, Uwwaaaaaaaaaaaa....! "

Why?

There are so many good friends around me, but not one was willing to extend a helping hand. How did it end up like this?

.....Ooo, I want to cry

The moment that thought flashed in her head there was another knock at the door.

"Hey, did someone just think about crying?"

"AAAAAAAAAAagh! No one wants to cry, don't come in here! Please hurry back to your room, okay?"

So

After continuous struggling, screaming, and resisting Miu worn herself out, her breathing became more and more ragged.

.....Again, let me first start with trying to persuade Class Rep.

Out of the various problems the top priority was to solve the problem before her eyes.

"Umm er, well! Class, Class Rep, can you hear me out.....
OK!"

Kuzuha paid no attention to the imploring Miu. She sat astride on Miu's body, not carrying about anything other than massaging Miu's breasts.

"Pl-please calm down and think about, okay? Br-breasts can't possibility absorb another person's height."

".....Not impossible. These are different from an ordinary person's chest. With such amazing boobs, it won't be surprising at all if there a mysterious possibility were to occur."

"O-once again~.... ...its, its impossible! UH y-you don't want to bully my chest.... ... I-I should of never compared my chest size to your height. I'm sorry, I say something insensitive... ...C-can you forgive me?"

After Miu sincerely apologized, Kuzuha's tiny hands suddenly stopped massaging her chest.

"....."

".....Err.....Cl-Class Rep?"

Kuzuha fell silent, Miu cautiously called out to her.

Then,

".....Well then call me by my name."

Kuzuha muttered.

"Umm -- Call you what?"

"My.....I want you call my name in the same way you address everyone else. As long as you promise to do that, I will forgive you."

"Oh"

Those unexpected words caused Miu to suddenly realize.

".....You call Izumi 'Chikage-san', Vice President as 'Haruka-san', and Listy-san, you also called her by her name. Why am I forever 'Class Rep'?"

Kuzuha eyes were brimming with resentment.

"Why.....Why am I the odd man out? Is it because I'm a child compared to everyone?"

"No, of course not..... you got it all wrong."

Miu quickly shook her head, and:

"Actually, I do feel that it is a little formal, but I also think 'Doumoto-san' is even more formal than 'Class Rep'. Its manners to call you 'Kuzuha-san', but strangely it seems like adding a layer between us. 'Kuzuha-chan' well, it would seem like I was treating you as a child, so"

"Then why didn't you not use any honorifics and just call me 'Kuzuha'!"

The drunk little girl got angry, and restarted rubbing Miu's chest.

Miu quickly restrained Kuzuha, "Ah, settle down," then she said :

"I mean..... that person and also Chikage call you Class Rep. What's more is you yourself called me 'Ousawa-san'. It seems like your not fond of other people and don't want to get too close, so...."

So

".....I thought it was best not too. "

Kuzuha puffed out her cheeks. Even though it was a sign she was angry face, it was very adorable.

When Miu saw that act, she abruptly came to see the truth.

..... Ah

Kuzuha had used an intimate way of speaking before with the same sort of childishness. Miu just didn't recall that affair. At that time when the mature Kuzuha couldn't bear the pressure did she reveal her true nature. Only once before, had Miu been addressed that way.

It was just one time.

"I'm certain that I called you "Miu" once during that affair. It was when the three of us were locked in the sports warehouse resulting in Ousawa-kun teasing that made us pee our pants -- "

"Uwaaaaaa-! Th-that is a secret we promised never to tell!"

Miu quickly thrust out her hands to cover Kuzuha's mouth.

That painful past was forgotten for Kuzuha's sake. Why would she freely reveal that in front of everyone? Since she drunk she may have lost common sense and reason. Then, without any hesitation she brushed off Miu's hands:

"After that.....when we return to the arena I tried to address you as Miu, but you still called me Class Rep. Maybe you're the one..... that has a problem with me, and hates it when I call you by your first name. So I had to changed back to 'Ousawa-san'."

"So I was...."

Miu let out a quiet sigh, she didn't know Kuzuha's feelings were hurt for such a long time.

For Miu, she found it a little unpleasant to call her with her 'Class rep' title, and always felt somewhat of a distance. However, the thought being over-familiar was even more unpleasant. Therefore, she played it safe and called her 'Class rep' just like everyone else.

But

Who could have imagined that Kuzuha thought the same way she did -- no, perhaps she was still on her own.

She felt a distance when everyone called her 'Class Rep', and lonely.

This might be the reason she was sitting on top of Miu and clutching onto her chest.

".....Call me.....Kuzuha.....I want you to call me Kuzuha!"

Kuzuha screamed out just like a spoiled child.

Rather than words, Miu respond with a big hug.

A gentle -- but firm hug.

"Ah -"

The unexpected hug, suddenly quieted down Kuzuha.

"I'm sorry..... I made you feel lonely and uncomfortable."

Miu whispered gently as she spoke.

"I also very much wanted to address you like that all along..... and now I don't have to restrain myself any longer."

Please... ...

I'm going to say, and I will say it properly.

Listen up

-- Kuzuha."

"....."

Miu clearly felt the small reaction from the body being held in her arms.

It was like when a puppy that notices it was called out to by its master.

And.

".....Again."

While nestled in Miu's chest, Kuzuha requested.

"Can you say my name one more time -- Miu?"

So

"Yeah..... Kuzuha."

Did you hear it?

With a smile Miu gently stroked her little back. Again, Ousawa Miu called Doumoto Kuzuha by her name.

Kuzuha had also called Miu's name out on her own, the same desire Miu had.

Then.....

"....."

"..... Kuzuha?"

Miu suddenly felt a gentle sigh in her arms.

"..... It looks like she's asleep."

Before she was aware of it Chikage was right beside her, and with a gentle smile she brushed away Kuzuha's hair that was sticking to her cheek.

"Class Rep -- wrong, it should be Kuzuha. Seriously, this child suppress her emotions too much.....she been building up a lot of pressure. I thought that today's get together was a good chance to relieve a little of her stress, and it went fairly smoothly."

".....Then, the aroma was for that?"

Chikage winks "Well" to Haruka who similarly came to their side.

"The essential oil was only to assist, but its effectiveness seemed to be far too strong. And instead gave Miu a few headaches... ... Oh well, the course of events are not important because it was a happy ending."

"The four of us are about the same age as Akatsuki. I also feel that was was why." Listy said.

"Kuzuha-chan's age differs with us a bit -- so we are especially susceptible. Its not hard to imagine she would feel lonely and uneasy."

"Ah..... right."

Miu slowly set down, trying her best not to wake the peacefully sleeping Kuzuha.

"Everyone, please listen to what I say."

She looked to the other three.

"If no one is against it --"

-- Oh, that's right."

Chikage intuitively understood her intentions and nodded.

"Even though Kuzuha's behavior was motivated by jealousy, but from now on I also think it would be a good idea called each other their name. Apart from narrowing the distance between us, it also deepen our feelings."

"I have no objections either."

Haruka agreed,

"We have already long since passed the stage to take offense on how we address one another."

"Also me too. If you're all going to call everyone by name, I want to."

Listy also agreed.

"Even though I'm a newcomer to the group..... I also want to become friends quickly with everyone."

"I see... ... That's great!"

Miu got the three's approval, and happily deepened her smile.

"Well then once again -- look after me from now on Chikage-san, Haruka-san, and Listy-san."

Then, she stared at Kuzuha sleeping soundly in her arms.

"My best regards -- Kuzuha."

Part 11

Listy took the sleeping Kuzuha from Miu and laid her on her bed, then gently covered her with her quilt.

"Now what? Kuzuha has fallen asleep, should we also go to bed soon?"

Looking back, Chikage was waving her index finger from side to side.

"It's too early right? The late-night revelry has let to begin."

As she said that their faces showed a smile.

"Umm, I thought it's pretty noisy already..... I'm a little tired now."

Miu somewhat disagreed.

"Yeah"

Listy felt the same way.

Fooling around with your good friends of course was fun, but now it might be a good time to end things.

"I can't hardly keep my eyes open anymore....."

".....By now it should be considerably late."

Haruka also agreed.

"Oh Are you sure? That's a pity."

Chikage received passive opposition from everyone else, but then she feigned a mysterious smile.

"-- I wanted to share some good information about Akatsuki."

"....."

"....."

"....."

Listy, Miu and Haruka immediately fell silent, Chikage deliberately pretended not to notice expressions on their faces.

"This information wouldn't have been suitable for Class Rep to hear. So I thought I'd use this chance to tell everyone now that's she asleep.....but forget it. Anyway, everyone is tired and wants to sleep, and it is considerably late so I think best to get some sleep. Ah but, I may end up forgetting exactly what the story was by tomorrow morning, so don't blame me."

After that, Chikage turned her back and looked around. Listy seized the their shoulders, then the trio huddled closely together.

"Suddenly I'm not sleepy." "Did my tiredness fly off somewhere ?." "It's a lot earlier than I thought."

The trio separated and returned to Chikage.

Chikage was smiling from ear to ear, then pretend to clear her throat a few times.

"To tell the truth -- Akatsuki is popular among the girls in Babel . Well now, it is at an absurd level."

"Yes, Umm,.....? Babel is the school that everyone goes to, right?"

Chikage nods to Listy's question, then let out a "Ah".

"At the entrance examination, for the first time in Babel's history it described Akatsuki as the 'True hero' during his Nolan screening . Followed by passing a special test set up by a member of COCOON, president Hikami. Lastly he fought with the other three student council members including Haruka to a draw. Even though the girls attending Babel have seen many heroes in the alternate worlds they crossed over to, or became heroes themselves , they still have no choice but to view Akatsuki's strength in a new light. Akatsuki's position in their hearts naturally is not an insignificant matter."

"Sure, I have heard similar rumors."

Haruka added,

"Though President Hikami is also considerably popular, but he is, after all, a manager of the world as part of COCOON. Which makes him extremely revered, so the majority are just secret admirers. By comparison --"

"Yes. Unlike the eminent and unapproachable student council president, Akatsuki is more like idol that's within reach. Besides Akatsuki's looks, the way he turns his nose up to authority is also one of his charms."

Chikage interjected.

"It is said that his outstanding ranking tournament's performance was the decisive blow for many of girls."

"Oh, and at that time I worked hard to help that person."

Miu tries to casually emphasize her position.

However.....

"Ah but..... they all see you as Akatsuki's 'Younger sister' not his 'Lover'.

Chikage shook her head with a wry smile,

"Although there are special cases in the special autonomous region that allows brothers and sisters to intermarry. Such cases are very very rare, so they don't see Miu as a rival. On the contrary , they see Akatsuki as the "Elder brother who risked his life to save his little sister". With many, that imagery raised more points."

"Th-that's not right....."

Miu's face cast a shadow.

"In short -- as long as we're around Akatsuki we don't have to worry about other women."

Listy also added:

"Although Akatsuki is certainly a lewd womanizer that's not all there is to him. He is bold, strong, and heroic. I don't know how many women in Alayzard were attracted to his virtues, but I never heard of him relenting."

Akatsuki was just mischievous and doesn't cross the final line of defense.

"Oh dear. You have a point certainly, so there might be no need to worry."

Chikage nodded,

"But what if the other party takes the initiative, would Akatsuki reject it?"

"That....."

Listy found herself at a loss for words.

..... There was the problem.

If tempted from the other party, based on 'not wanting to make a woman look bad' Akatsuki would never reject her.

"There are plenty of aggressive girls in the world. And at first glance even a usually quite cute girl.....can meet someone she likes and then suddenly became a formidable predator."

Chikage words seemed reasonable, as Haruka couldn't help but nod.

"I have so also run into this type of girl in Babel."

"Moreover Akatsuki's rise to popularity happened very quickly. There doesn't seem to be agreement to strictly prohibit snatching him from behind each others backs between the female students."

Chikage sighed.

"Well right now, they are all tripping over each other, and it doesn't appear that any female student has confessed to him. But.... .. I don't know how long this situation will continue. What if someone suddenly confesses when Akatsuki is in an empty classroom. If that happens things can hardly be controlled....."

"A confession as soon as he enters a classroom."

Chikage returned a wry smile to horrified Miu.

"Don't forget Akatsuki is weak to a woman's tears. If the girl cries in the middle of her confession. How would that turn out?"

"....."

"....."

"....."

The three were unintentionally lost in thought.

After they imagined the scene in their heads, in unison:

" " "Compromise with them." " "

No way..... It turned out like this even in this world.

Listy couldn't help but bury her head in her hands.

"Eh, is there a need to be so upset?"

Chikage said,

"Listy and Miu are already living together Akatsuki. They must have naturally developed that kind of relationship long ago."

" " "Do not!" "

Listy and Miu shouted at the same time.

Though considerably close to such a situation, nevertheless they haven't crossed the final line of defense.

"A young healthy man and two woman living under the same roof What?"

Chikage gave them a suspicious look, then it was Haruka's turn to continue:

"That's too direct, Chikage."

Then she calmly looked Listy and Miu square in the face.

"It must be their beliefs -- peculiar to Alayzard."

"This has nothing to do with religion."

Listy immediately rejected Haruka's misconceptions.

"Separately, we just"

At this point, Listy glanced at Miu.

"....."

"....."

Lacking the experience the two blushed.

"Just.....there is no chance to be alone....."

"Oh.... If Akatsuki requested, would you refuse?"

"Umm....." "That....."

Listy and Miu were at a loss, because Chikage evidently hit the bull's-eye.

To be nestled in the Akatsuki's arms, to devote themselves to Akatsuki, to become Akatsuki's woman.

It was the future that Listy and Miu dreamt of.

And, it was even the future they were hoping for.

However Listy can't dare to say the phrase 'I want you to embrace me.'. Miu was also probably the same. They still weren't brazen enough -- and can't abandon the trepidation in their hearts.

..... Why was that?

Listy felt a bit frustrated.

If I can't voice it myself, then I wonder If I am able to become Akatsuki's woman?

But

Even so, the both of us still hope that Akatsuki would embrace us in his arms. I want to feel that I'm needed by him.

"....."

"....."

Listy and Miu remained silent.

"Well, I can understand the feelings you to have, but"

Chikage continued with a bitter smile,

"Just on the basis of having a little bit of an atmosphere, and fact that the both of you are so cute it should be very easy to reach a hand out and grab it."

"But....."

"That sort of thing is a first for us..... we really don't know what to do."

Listy and Miu hesitantly stated, looking very embarrassed.

"Akatsuki is not some super slow male protagonist commonly seen in light novels. Rather I think that he is sensitive to such an atmosphere."

Don't worry Chikage's smile said,

"When the moment comes he will naturally lead you."

"But what if it doesn't go well, and then I'm hated by him....
.."

Listy was looking down at the ground while blushing. If she was unable to satisfy Akatsuki, so much so that he loses hope. She's afraid that... she'll never get over it and leave a shadow in her heart forever.

Then Miu suddenly:

"Actually, I always had an idea."

Her tone immediately attracted the attention of everyone present.

"I hope that my first time with that person -- everyone would be together."

That statement unintentionally caused the room to fall silent.

" " "What.....?" " "

They all asked the same question at the same time.

Listy was unable to hide the quandary in her heart.

"Er Miu-chan, you..... have always had this thought on your mind?"

"I-It's because.....what if I don't know what to do either, at least if we to do it together with everyone then we could all help with ideas. And also I wanna watch Chikage-san, Listy-san, and Haruka-san from the side to learn, and take notes. But I thought that under surface one after another might feel like a ranking and be unpleasant -- so everyone together would be the best way. So that there would be no unfairness, no one would question who was first or who was last."

The redness spread over Miu's face the more she spoke, while also alternatively covering her mouth with both hands.

Then she sneaked a peek at everyone.

".....Is that no good?"

She asked rather shyly.

"Umm, this How can I put it?"

Even the very open-minded Chikage didn't know how to answer.

--Haruka, what do you think?"

"Wah, don't put this on me!"

Haruka quickly waved her hands,

"These are the particular beliefs of Alayzard. You should ask Listy!"

"W-wait a minute! When did I say that? This sort of thing has nothing to do with beliefs!"

"Uh ... Did I say something strange?"

Baffled as to why their reactions fell short of her expectations, Miu can't help but reveal a troubled look.

"....."

"....."

"....."

The three only looked at each other in the eye to achieved a consensus. Chikage with a nod accepted to be the representative:

"I say Miu.....that sorta stuff can be learned from DVDs or games that you can get.....okay?"

"But..... umm, by watching that can I learn what that person likes?"

Miu tilted her heard, Haruka mildly apologetic:

"Yes it is so, but we may not be able to please Ousawa Akatsuki"

"Its all right, as long as I'm not the only one who is embarrassed. I don't care at all."

Miu kepted her composure, while Listy put on a fake smile,

"But that said..... isn't doing that sort of thing with others watching already embarrassing?"

"Yeah, although that is true.....whenever that person sees me naked it already is enough to make me want to dig a hole and crawl into."

Miu paused,

"But unable to satisfy the person you like, I think is more embarrassing."

Further.....

"Didn't everyone here vow that no matter what happens we will be together forever?"

And

".....And now it turn out like this..... "

Her tone revealed her obvious displeasure,

"Does everyone really find it that awful to be embraced by that person with me so much?"

"Eh.....no. Miu-chan, we didn't mean it like that!"

Slow down a minute, Miu is getting mad at us?

Was there any chance that it could be us who were wrong?

Too much chaos was unfolding, Listy's thoughts were in disorder losing all common sense. But then again, why was Miu so persistent about this?

Then Miu continued in a sulky tone:

".....If we all did it together, I feel that Kuzuha would feel very secure."

"Wait! You even intended to involve Kuzuha?"

Listy unintentionally cried out in horror.

"Uh, Well... ... Suddenly the previous thing is not so much of a worry."

Seeing the situation heading into a bad direction, Chikage quickly jumped in to smooth things over.

"Since there is so such uneasiness to create such a special relationship with the Akatsuki, first why don't we get accustomed to said atmosphere."

She thought up a good idea to propose.

"Therefore I suggest a test of courage. Everyone here will take turns sneaking into Akatsuki's room. After climbing into his bed you have to count to one hundred before coming back.....How about it?"

" " "Never! " " "

Listy, Miu, and Haruka refused immediately.

"Listy and Haruka are understandable..... but, could you tell me why you also opposed, Miu? You're the one who wanted everyone to do that all together."

Chikage was mystified, Miu bashfully said:

"Because I don't have confidence in myself."

" " "She still says that! " " "

The three yelled in unison.

"Really"

Chikage put her hand to her forehead. It seems she could sense a big headache coming.

"So what about 'making the world your enemy for Akatsuki' or 'prepared to put your life on the line' --"

"Haa ~" Chikage let out hoity-toity sigh. Then looked down on the other three with disdain in her eyes,

-- After all that, it was only hot air."

To the Chikage's provocation.

"Th-that's not true!" "It, it was not!" "D-Don't spew nonsense!"

Listy and the others loudly refuted at the same time.

"Ah"

When she realized what was going on it was already a step too late.

"I know, a little thing like that is nothing for us."

Chikage looked around at everyone with a proud smile.

"For the sake of fairness we should all draw lots. However, if no likes that I can go first since I suggested it -- How does that sound?"

Part 12

The order for the test of courage was set, and Chikage was unanimously picked first.

It was very late at night and the hallway was silent, she quietly tiptoed towards Akatsuki's room.

She lightly turned the door handle trying to be as quite as possible. Only then did she discovered that the door wasn't locked. It seems that after Akatsuki stole Listy's panties he had entered and immediately locked the door. However later after repeatedly going to check in on them he must of forgot to lock the door.

"....."

Therefore, Chikage erased her footsteps, and sneaked into the room.

The moonlight illuminated the night sky, and indirectly dyed the room with a pale blue light. Chikage slowly made her way step by step.

Towards the back of the room -- there was a bed against the wall. The stage for the test of courage.

"Yet, this is "

Upon approaching the first thing noticeable was the size of Akatsuki's bed.

It was quite considerable, it doesn't appear to be a double.

It might be as large as a queen or even still a king-size bed.

..... A big bed. Even with 'everyone together' it still won't be crowded

Was this why Miu was able to say such an astonishing thing?

-- No, that's probably not the case.

Listy and Miu were princesses in Alayzard. Therefore they are probably accustomed to such a big bed. Rather, it might be the normal size of bed for them.

And now there was the owner of this room, a young man quietly breathing in his sleep on the big bed. Looking at his serene sleeping face, Chikage couldn't help but smiled.

"This might be considered a perk....."

For a while, she stared at Akatsuki's sleeping face.

Miu Ousawa, Haruka Nanase, Listy Sherfied, Kuzuha Doumoto

They were deeply captivated by Akatsuki Ousawa's charm, Chikage Izumi was no exception.

As a girl, this was a very natural reaction.

And being close enough to touch him filled Chikage with a burst of happiness.

"Well.....time to get down to business."

While mumbling, Chikage was prepared to squeeze into Akatsuki's bed when --

--Is this a Yobai [6]?"

His tone hinted at slight smile on his face. However, Chikage wasn't surprised.

There were five girls laughing and giggling in the next room. Akatsuki not being able to sleep can easily be imagined.

".....Waiting until the last minute to speak up, you truly are evil.
"

She looked at his face before returning a wry smile.

"If I really had an ulterior motive. I would have waited until after you got into my bed before making a sound."

Akatsuki smile had a touch of ridicule.

Chikage floated a smile of consent 'You made your point'.

"Uh, we really did keep you up..... Sorry, seems we made too much noise next door."

"No, it's okay. I don't think you were especially loud -- In the first place, I have been asleep for some time."

Although Akatsuki said that with a smile on his face, but his eyes showed traces of seriousness.

"-How did it go? The 'Things that must be discussed', is it settled?"

He only ask a straightforward question. However, Akatsuki's 'Things that must be discussed' implied many things.

Izumi Chikage could not help thinking that this question covers a full range of topics on various levels.

"Yeah, it was settled..... Kuzuha, Haruka or Listy, everyone became closer, we are now more united than ever."

Chikage intentionally called the three by there names, as a way to show Akatsuki their new sense of bonding.

Through this party, each others relationship became a lot more intimate.

"Oh, I see....that's good news."

While listening to Chikage's report he showed a satisfied smile.

"Thanks for putting together this party. You help everyone develop an impressive sense of team -- Chikage."

Akatsuki had also deliberately referred to Chikage's by her name.

As if the two also developed a new sense of connection with one another.

The surprise attack caught off guard with her name being so easily called, making Chikage's slightly blush. Putting her in a somewhat difficult situation.

"Oh, calling me by my name."

She was pretending to be calm by tempting Akatsuki with a tongue-in-cheek tone response.

"Its something like that. When a girl sneaks into my room in the middle of the night I'm not as tactless to use her surname."

Akatsuki nonchalantly shrugged,

"What's wrong.....is this really a Yobai? I accept all comers."

Saying here

--Hmm? Lets see what you got."

Akatsuki eyes rested on what was in her hand. Chikage just simply stated her reason.

"If you've been sleeping. I was going to continue our test of courage, but now your awake. So --"

Chikage smiled and took out a glass bottle and cups.

"Want a cup? I was kicked out by everybody, I say this occasion deserves a drink. I mean there's no alcohol in it, just Oolong tea. So you shouldn't mind having a cup, right?"

"Oh, that's a good idea."

Akatsuki sat up on the bed. The thin fell down exposing his naked torso.

"Ah... ... very sensational picture..... "

"Is it so? Then If i say so myself, your outfit is also rather sexy."

The camisole and hot pants she had on left a lot of skin exposed.

Chikage felt Akatsuki's gaze, giving her a slight titillation.

"Hmm, you finally managed to treat me as a 'woman'?"

-- Of course, you are sexy woman."

He said without hesitation. Faced with the pick-up line Chikage lightly laughed:

"Come on, here."

"Oh, Sankyu[\[7\]](#)."

Chikage grabbed Akatsuki's water glass, then picked up the bottle and poured a cup of oolong tea for him.

-- By the way.

Inside his glass already was crushed sleeping pills.

It was a safety measure for just in case. However, it wasn't intended to protect her own chastity.

If Miu and Listy had already had such a relationship with Akatsuki, Chikage naturally wouldn't of taken such countermeasure.

.....Stealing a march wouldn't be fair to them.

Chikage smiled wryly in her mind.

Before she set off she incidentally called out to the three others. In case Akatsuki was up, she said she might hang out for a little before returning. And if things took a wrong turn, she was going to scream SOS to let them know and come help.

It's been about seven minutes since she entered and poured him a glass. Akatsuki raised up his cup:

"Then a toast -- to you guys new friendship."

"Well, thank youAh, next time we will let you join."

Chikage smiled as she raised her glass. They lightly clanged each others glasses together, Kanpai![\[8\]](#) Akatsuki drank the contents in the glass in one breath.

"But then again..... lately, I'll been pushing a lot exhausting things on you."

He said in a hearty tone.

"It's fine. You and Miu are my important friends..... I don't think of it as trouble."

Chikage answered with a smile, but yet Akatsuki's vanished. Instead he made a serious face,

"Ah, that is certainly true -- However, it may not be deserving to called it trouble. But still your forcing yourself a little to remain composed, right?"

Akatsuki said in a low tone, while he stared at Chikage.

"..... What do you mean?"

Chikage smile faded,

"Are you saying that deep down I am reluctant to become yours and Miu's friend?"

"I don't mean it like that, after all, 'reluctant' is a type of 'trouble'."

Akatsuki shook his head to deny it.

"You said Miu and I are your important friends, so you should helping us. But from what I've seen this was not the reason that you are helping us."

"Akatsuki, you mean I'm overdoing it to become your friends?"

"Ah, what it means."

Akatsuki said clearly,

"Maybe you really do consider us as important friends In my eyes though, this approach only exacerbates that bad habit of yours."

"My bad habit.....?"

Confronted with Chikage's questioning, Akatsuki did not hesitate to answer --

As if to declare,

"In order to play the good classmate, the good friend, the good sister -- your bad habit is to always repress or sacrifice yourself."

Part 13

For a moment, a suffocating silence came over the room.

"Good grief..... Your imagination is rich."

To dispel the awkwardness, Chikage glossed over the atmosphere,

"Also, you said my bad habit was more apparent Meaning, it's not the first time, huh?"

"Alas.....in the sports warehouse in Babel when you were making out with that other girl, I noticed."

Akatsuki's tone was unchanged,

"Izumi -- you're not fully a lesbian, right?"

"..... You guessed wrong."

Chikage subconsciously looks away from him.

"When I was in Alayzard for a short period of time I was a bodyguard for a brothel. At the end of day a women's behavior comes from heart, or its simply acting. If you don't want my eyes to see through it, you have to steel yourself a great deal more."

Akatsuki recalled that scene,

"When I saw you making out with that girl I could tell you were accustomed to it. But that does not mean you had abundant experience, rather you were passively reacting to her needs. You were playing to meet the expectations she placed on you."

".....So you're saying I put out my hands on the girl just to act like the good guy?"

Chikage stared cross-eyed at Akatsuki.

"Of course not, else I would of said 'You're not a lesbian.' Presumably, its just like before -- you just wanted to be needed by someone, his or her."

He continued,

"Everyone who has been summoned to another world has suffer some degree of trauma. Then after great difficulty finally returning to this world only to be confined to the special autonomous region separating them from their own families. A sense of loneliness would only be natural. I didn't mean to pry into your private life, but perhaps they all were just like you in experiencing a number of things they would rather forget. Something that couldn't be endured alone any more?"

"....."

Chikage was suddenly speechless.

"A good way to fill the loneliness would be to seek out a person with the same wound, who might heal the pain. And if the other was the same sex it becomes easier to talk about heart troubles. With your cheerful personality, and your liking to take care of others those lonely girls would have gathered, right? It could just be your natural disposition, or you altered yourself to pursue the feeling of being needed by someone. Which I don't know."

Akatsuki continued to say:

"If I'm right, you always listen to their troubles, heal their inner loneliness, but kept your pain and loneliness deep inside your heart. All because you worry that they are holding onto something really painful, and it must be dealt with before it's too late. How can they take into consideration the worries of another? Therefore you sit there and quietly listen to them tell of their troubles, and just play the role. Your only willing to let them unload what's on their mind, willing to give them a warmth, and willing to fix their broken heart. No doubt for those people there isn't any other ideal place to go."

He paused for a moment -

"You -- never noticed that your heart suffering even more from those people's pain and worries."

"....."

Chikage kept silent in the face of Akatsuki's speculation. Even thought silence was tantamount affirming his words, she had no other choice. Chikage Izumi did not have the words to refute.

"You are trying fill the gap inside some else heart, but it's not easy. In order to meet their needs you have to constantly make changes, even if it is not true to yourself....."

Akatsuki paused here.

".....Listening to someone bare their soul, even if that someone is a girl, your friendship can gradually metamorphosis into love, also isn't strange. At that time, you should of struggled with your true feelings. However -- You still decided to meet the needs of those girls, because they need you to. It was not to fill loneliness in your own heart."

Chikage silently listened to Akatsuki's reasoning, and not contested until now:

"Although it is quite an interesting story.....it's all in your head . Is there any reliable evidence?"

"We are talking about a person's thoughts and feelings, of course, there is no conclusive physical evidence. But when you take in account previous events, they can be used as a reference."

So Akatsuki revealed his reasoning:

"First, out of all your classmates, the first person you actively spoke to was me and Miu. During my entrance exam, I caused a

huge disturbance. The other students would naturally shun us, but you were the only one willing to talk to us."

"I simply did not have the heart to, that's all.... there was no other meaning."

Chikage averted her gaze.

"Is it so? In my eyes, the other students attitudes were normal. Class B already understands what it was like have a problem child, Onizuka. I clashed with the student council president Kyoya Hikami, obviously I was a more troublesome character than Onizuka. Any normal student would not want to get involved with me, yet you tried to advised us 'It's best not get involved with Onizuka' -- however, you were aware that I was probably more of problem child than him."

Why was that?

"The reason was simple, we were newcomers to Babel unfamiliar with the school rules. If you could get close, you would definitely obtain the sense of being needed. So you, called out to us."

"....."

"Conversely, you most likely kept your distance from the people who didn't need you. Therefore when the semester started you would be independent, and alone could help Class Rep.

However, after Miu became a mutual friend Class Rep opened her heart troubles to you. With them counting on you naturally your friendship developed rapidly.

"..... Akatsuki."

"The Vice President as well. When she first arrived in Alayzard Haruka insisted on neutrality, and would not listen to our reasoning. So you completely ignored her. However by fighting together in that war, and the matter when I almost lost my life was the turning point for you and Haruka to become close. After coming back to this world from Alayzard, both of yours relationship has improved a lot."

"..... Enough, Akatsuki."

Don't say any more -- Chikage was pleading in her mind to him.

Please don't reveal my weak side.

In the next room we were able to establish a new bond. Wasn't that enough? However, Akatsuki won't stop here. Izumi Chikage knew better than anyone else why that was.

If he choose to stop here, she will continue to wear a mask.

Then one day in the future she will be left with tears of regret.

Akatsuki will stop them now -- her future tears.

So he will continue.

"Next you will continue to be the diplomatic person you were up til now. Maintaining the same distance from everyone equally, and one-sidedly hear their worries. For you, maybe it would be easy to do, but unfortunately the sense of distance will suddenly come back into your life. You have suffered enough for others the rest --"

One breath.

-- Is ours."

Part 14

Ousawa Akatsuki said in a very firm tone.

"Even though I think you are happy that you become increasingly better friends me, Miu and Class Rep. At the same, somewhere in the back of your mind there is an indescribable fear that this genuine friendship will suddenly disappear..... and whether you would withstand the loss. So you proposed this party -- right?"

So

"..... Haha, I surrender."

Along with the self-mockery, Chikage through her hands in the air.

"It is as you say Akatsuki. There is a part of me that always wants to be needed by someone. However, doesn't everyone have

these kind of thoughts more or less? Furthermore isn't it only natural for friends to accommodate to each other? I don't think there is anything wrong with that."

It should also be understandable to maintain a persistent attitude.

Chikage evasive eyes revealed such a message.

However Akatsuki won't endorse Chikage's excuses.

-- At the sleepover today, Chikage and Miu's bonds with everyone had deepened.

Except, Chikage was still wearing a mask.

Making all that effort totally meaningless. If it wasn't the real Chikage there was no value in the current situation.

However, Chikage smiley face mask was very strong, and won't come off so easily.

Still to have some meaning today's get together.

Ousawa Akatsuki -- can't stop at this point.

"Before Listy returned to the room with all you guys she seemed a little apprehensive, so I played a little prank on her to get her mind off it. If I guessed right.....it was because she worried and probably saying 'she will become a burden to everyone', right?"

"Amazing, you completely foresaw that.....you really know Listy-san's personality like the back of your hand."

Chikage was trying to pretend to be calm. Akatsuki continued to press on, intending to break that mask of her's.

-- If that was the case, then you guys probably said something like 'we will never abandon you.'?"

Just as he finished

"-!"

Startled, Chikage gasped. Proving that everything he surmised was unmistakable. Then her shoulders started to shake at first followed by her whole body shaking.

Therefore, Akatsuki pressed for an answer.

"However from the outset those words were not for Listy. If today you gave up on has Listy, the moment you became a burden it is likely that you would be abandoned. Your deepest and darkest fear."

"I, I"

Chikage said with trembling voice, her face lost its previous confidence.

Her mask -- had been stripped off.

Then Akatsuki lightly touched Chikage's shoulder.

"-?"

Chikage's whole body received a shock.

She looked back at Akatsuki.

Looking back into Chikage's eyes, Akatsuki floated a wry smile on his face.

"When I went to the room before to see if "someone" was crying. Actually, that someone I was concerned about was not Miu or Listy, but you."

While saying that he pulled Chikage over.

"-----Ah!"

Chikage let out a feeble voice. Akatsuki hands wrapped around Chikage's back, and look into her eyes.

"Why is it that you think people don't need you? Is it anxiety? Do you think that if you don't play the good classmate, the good friend, the good sister no one will need you? However, doesn't this mean you don't believe in your friends, and don't trust me and Miu."

"B-because....."

Chikage looked down at the ground.

"A little while ago, you felt it was very painful. With much effort everybody got closer to each other, but you could not open your heart and connect with everyone. For that you hated yourself more than anything."

"B-b-because.....!"

Chikage looking up, staring at Akatsuki.

Crying.

"Becoming the person everybody needs, isn't that common desire of everyone?"

Chikage said,

"I don't want a person to be all alone I'm tired of being alone -- I can."

She squeezed out her heartfelt cries.

The root of Chikage Izumi's suffering.

Therefore.....

-- Don't worry, I won't leave you."

While saying, Akatsuki tightly hugged Chikage.

"Haven't you've been by our side all along, and on the other hand..... haven't I always been by your side, isn't that so? Ah,

beside me there is Miu, you are not one bit alone. Chikage -- I am the same as you, I want to become the person you need."

".....Akatsuki, you do?"

Chikage raised her voice in surprise. Akatsuki nodded "Ah" and released her.

"Or do you not want me by your side?"

"....."

Chikage was quite for a while. At last,

".....How could... ... I not want that...."

She quietly said with her voice trembling, then embrace Akatsuki on her own.

Therefore, Akatsuki embraced her closely in return.

Her actions signified that Izumi Chikage took off her mask, and a completely new bond was born between the two.

Part 15

She continued to be embraced by Akatsuki for a while.

Chikage had stopped crying, and regained the control of her breathing. Then slowly looked up.

"But Akatsuki, still"

"Ah, I understand.....the friendship and feelings between you and those guys..... was not a lie."

Then, Akatsuki in a low tone,

"However... ... you don't need to worry about losing anything you don't need to hate yourself I realize.....your feelings..... ."

The words didn't come out, and he let up on the pressure of his hug.

"A-Akatsuki.....?'

Startled, Chikage called out to him, only to hear in return the quiet breathing of someone sleeping.

"Oh"

Izumi Chikage remembered the crushed sleeping pills in his glass. They must have finally taken effect.

.....Why the hell did the effects kick in now.....?

She wasn't going to blame him for falling asleep, because it was none other than her own masterpiece. However if he was half asleep for some time now, then absolutely there wouldn't be any lies in his words.

All of that was the truth.

-- Conversely, if Akatsuki was completely clear-headed and if he said the same thing with a serious tone.

She also would have been very happy. But, somewhere deep inside her mind she would have suspected that those words were out of Akatsuki's kindness, and would not have believed in them so firmly without any doubts.

Skeptical that Akatsuki was just like herself, playing a role of the good guy for her. However, it was not so. Although Akatsuki was somewhat heavy as he slumped over in her arms. She was unable to hide her inner joy.

"Thank you, Akatsuki"

She whispered that to him to not wake him, but when she planned to lay him on the floor --

-- Fuua!"

A sense of pleasure suddenly ran through her, reflexively a sweet voice came out.

After a closer look. Akatsuki's hand was touching her breast, Chikage instinctively smiled wryly to herself.

Even deep asleep he pass up his chance to womanize, as expected Akatsuki was to the letter a big pervert.

But

When Akatsuki chest Palms off his upper body cute little sticker , and pull down pants zipper, Chikage wonder and his face was downcast.

Akatsuki's hand on her chest started to strip off her camisole, and when the zipper on her hot pants began to lower the smile disappeared from Chikage's face.

No matter how you look at it, this was too strange.

"W-wait a moment I said, ah..... Akatsuki are you awake?"

Chikage tentatively said, unexpectedly Akatsuki looked up --

"Ha, your certainly very much awake."

She laughed, then grinned while closing her eyes.

"No way, you wouldn't happen to be half asleep... ... Wow, ah, wait!"

Akatsuki had completely taken off the hot pants. Chikage could not help but burst into shouting, scared.

Her camisole was already discard, leaving her just in her underwear.

Akatsuki was overjoyed with the situation.

"What's wrong? Even thought familiar with woman, but it looks like your not skilled with a man."

"H-hold on Akatsuki I didn't intend on this Fuaaa!"

When she turned her back to flee his hand touch her waist giving him a contact point to tamper with the Ki in her body.

At the same time a fire was born in the depths of her body, moreover it began to burn faster and stronger.

When Chikage noticed the fire was a torrent of pleasure, it was too late.

"Ah, Ahhh... ... Fuuuuuaaaaaaaaaa ~ ~ ~!"

It become impossible for Chikage Izumi to resist any longer.

"Why the rush to leave? With all the trouble you went through this is exactly what you need."

Akatsuki had an evil smile,

"If you run away from your feelings now, then nothing will change."

Listen carefully -- Akatsuki in a very serious tone:

"Now what you need most is to experience how much I need you. You may think that I'm a bit heavy-handed, but that's okay. To completely break that obstinate mask of yours a bit of tough love is necessary."

"Ah, this is not good Akatsuki... ... Miu and the others are going to hear my voice "

Chikage desperately resisted while raising a sweet voice.

"Why did you try to run? You have someone thinking of you free of charge. You just had to follow your instincts, accepting what that person wants for you would have been better based on that."

A breath,

"Therefore I will firmly engrave it into your mind making it impossible for you to forget that I will stay by your side, and how much I cherish you."

"But, but Ah! "

An instinctively sweet voice exhaled.

Akatsuki forcefully raised her up by the butt.

And,

"Chikage, I will enlighten you..... to how very much of a woman you are."

He slowly stripped off her panties, then grabbed her completely exposed butt with the palms of his hands.

Chikage's tampered Ki caused everyone pore on her body to become extremely sensitive leading to --

"~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~"

An unrestrained sweet voice that only a woman could absolutely raise.

Part 16

The same time.

"I knew it I told you, we should have stopped them right away."

".....There is no other way. We have to go help her."

The delicate scream was heard from the room next to his compelling them to begin to move. As was Miu and Listy said so.

"Haruka-san, you stay behind and take care of Kuzuha. I fear if she wakes up cannot see any of us around her little heart would break."

"I understand."

Haruka nodded, looking a little stiff,

"Both of you -- be careful."

Nodding in response to Haruka's concern, Miu and Listy walked out of the room.

The both of them rapidly moved though the hallway --

"....."

"....."

They both glanced at each other in front of Akatsuki's room before they kicked open the door and rushed in.

Then on top of the bed the scene reflected in their eyes.

With her panties only lowered to the knees, the nearly-naked Chikage was trembling under the sensual stimulation. As Chikage's whole body was being caressed dexterously by Akatsuki with eyes shut.

The two prepared themselves for a horrible situation before entering the room, but

"Uwaa..... just like the situation at that time, almost exactly the same!"

Miu can't help but flinch backwards a few steps.

She was reminded of the first night she came to this world. When she sneaked into Akatsuki's room. Also at that time, she went through a similar snafu because he was half asleep.

-- In the end how did I escape his clutches?

Miu, who remembered such an experience:

"Listy-san, that"

She signaled to table next to the bed with her eyes. On the table there was a marble clock. In case the wind magic was poorly manipulated there would be no guarantee that Chikage could be accidentally injured.

A direct physical attack was the most effective method.

But Miu was reluctant to employ her AD and summon her weapon. With all the effort Haruka took to bring the new model ADs over today she doesn't want its first battle to be with a despicable sex maniac.

That's why, the artificial marble clock was the best option.

"Can you please do it? I'll somehow try and act as bait."

Listy understood the intent of such a strategy by Miu,

"O~ke, no problem."

She immediately nodded to confirm.

Then the two of them started walking towards the bed.

"Eh.....you two also came to tell Izumi how much you need her?"

"

Akatsuki in his half asleep state turned to look at the two exposing a duplicitous smile.

For now, they didn't know exactly what he was saying,

"Ah, yeah... ... That's right. Can we also join you?"

The still unclear Miu attracted his attention with her remark while approaching.

Listy stayed in Miu's shadow using her diversion to reach for the marble clock on the bedside table.

"Oh, well, very good. I see -- you two together."

The moment Akatsuki said so,

"Huh?" "Kyaa!"

Akatsuki dragged both of them on the bed. One held under his left arm and the other embraced by his right arm.

Miu and Listy couldn't hide their inner confusion.

Even Miu was still out of his reach, say nothing of Listy who still further, Akatsuki's hands had somehow reached them.

What on earth -- They both thought.

The two suddenly found themselves entangled with a white rope around their waists.

"When did this?"

"If you look you'll see it is the bed sheet. Through my renkan keikikou it can be fastened into a rope with my Ki."

Akatsuki to said calmly, Miu turn pale with fright as her strategy clasped do his unexpected behavior.

"This, this was done for? "

"While Izumi is still out of it. This was the only way pull you guys over here at the same time."

"Wh-what your gonna simultaneous.....!"

Listy loudly protested, while he nonchalantly replied:

"That goes without saying? No matter who was the first there would be a sense of unfairness..... Crap, you hurry up and take your clothes."

Miu's pajamas buttons were easily removed compared to a man's shirt. It made taking it off surprising fast.

"Waa -! Li-listy-san run away! It would be a useless death!"

"I am, I know! But the rope is tied up so tight, you could never!"

Next Listy's shirt was unbuttoned one by one starting from top to bottom

Still, the two did not give up desperately resisting.

"Really! You guys came to help, but faster than anyone else you tried to slip away?"

In a criticize voice that was half asleep,

"To think I just manged to stop Chikage from running away, and you two want to spoil it. Do you want to ruin my good deed? No, no."

As he finished

"Fuaaaaaaaa~!"

Miu and Listy simultaneously raised a sweet scream.

Everything become pure white in an instant. The two immediately knew they were rapidly rising to the peak.

"Aaaa, ahhhh!" "Fu..... fu,aaaaaaaaaaa.....!"

Their bodies trembled because of pleasure. They looked at Akatsuki with incredulity.

-- What hell did he do to us?

Similar situations like this have happened before, but it would not have been this easy. Moreover, she ended up losing all the

power in her whole body at once. And the embers of pleasure were likely to cause them to lose consciousness.

"Oh, in the kitchen and on the stairs before I sent Ki into your bodies. Because there was remaining Ki in your body, and I gave you even more Ki here. It would only be natural when they collide with each other it will certainly bring about an explosive pleasure."

With her waning consciousness, she could still hear Akatsuki's dim voice. But they both couldn't understand much of what he just said.

Finally,

"Sorry to keep you waiting, Izumi Our other two most important friends are already here, you won't be lonely anymore. From now on, I'll let you know how much I really need you."

The second half of what Akatsuki said although it reached their ears, their brains have long ago lost the ability to think.

Part 17

The number of frail screams from next door has increased.

This was a plot to a horror movie, Nanase Haruka thought.

The victims continue to increase, and the people sent to destroy the *kyonshī*^[9] also become a *kyonshī*.

Kuzuha's protection was her responsibility.

"However....the way things are going."

No doubt Chikage had to look on helplessly hiding in the room as Miu and Listy have become Akatsuki's prey.

What should I do? -- Haruka was deep in thought.

"Damn It can't be helped."

After some struggle, Haruka choose the best of both worlds.

So Nanase Haruka headed towards the Akatsuki's room carrying Kuzuha,

And through the open door, she only put her head in to see the situation inside.

"Th-this.....!"

Though it was possible to imagine what was going on to some extent, but seeing with her own eyes cause an absurd shock. She was fully aware of what Akatsuki could do, however this degree of exaggeration actually goes far beyond Haruka's imagination.

On the bed were four people with all there limbs intertwined in some sort of complex geometries, like playing a game of twister, or some kind of weird stretching exercises.

"Wh-what can I do....."

Frightened, Haruka sprinted away.

She wanted to pretend she didn't see anything and calmly return to the room, but

.....No, I can't run away.

Haruka encouraged herself.

We must help each other, and never abandon each other -- I just promised that to them.

I will not make that oath a lie.

However.....

"Kuzuha is still too young. I can't let her witness such a spectacle....."

It can't be helped. She gently leaned Kuzuha on the wall in the hallway careful not to wake her.

"I Nanase Haruka -- from here on out will be your opponent!"

She decided in her mind, and jumped into the battlefield.

"Eh, Haruka.....you also came?"

Without a care that Akatsuki noticed her, she took large strides up to bed, planning to avoid the other three, and at the same time as touching him she would unleash her wind magic to blow only him out the window.

But

"Its not possible"

However, her wind magic was negated. Akatsuki wasn't affected in any way. Haruka dazed stood there for a long while, but immediately understood what happened.

Now, was exactly like the time when Akatsuki was on the verge of in Alayzard. An absolute barrier that cancels all magic.

"Good, very good.....you come along too."

While saying so, he reached out to grab her -- Haruka's AD reacted.

"Huh -?"

Haruka's rasied her voice perplexed, as to why her pajamas began to change.

A function of the AD -- was to automatically change into the most suitable clothing.

When she was hiding at a brothel in Alayzard she wore a sensational lace bustier.

"Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

Haruka reflexively screamed.

"Hey, Hey, Hey, What time do think it's right now.....If you keep shouting like this you'll wake the neighbors?"

After Akatsuki ridiculed her, he forced Haruka into his arms.

And stuck his lips on her breast.

A vital point Nanase Haruka was there -- one of her eleven moles.

-- Of course, Melissa's aphrodisiac has long ago left her body.

However, Haruka's body remembered the feeling.

She still remembered when her vital points were subjected to repeated attacks, and the supreme pleasure.

After the last of baptism, Haruka body got a comprehensive development.

When Akatsuki once again subjected her to the same stimulus --

" ~ "

Haruka let out a noiseless tender moan.

As for the feeling that developed, the dimension of pleasure she received was not able to be understood by Haruka's brain.

Haruka's whole body stiffen to pleasure with her waist being embraced by Akatsuki.

And, the state of climax continued for a while.

"-- ! Ah! Fuaaa... ... Wa... ... Fu... ... Ahhh"

After Haruka remembered how to breathe once again, the embers of pleasure spread to every corner like a wave along with the oxygen. Her hands and feet unconsciously trembled, a way of telling how pleased her body was.

-- If nothing else, Haruka's heart has chosen to resign itself to Akatsuki.

Like that night at the brothel -- half way during the detoxification process she submitted to the pleasure.

Haruka resolved herself to entrusted everything to Akatsuki when --

"Uh..... Where am I.....?"

Kuzuha suddenly enters the room from the hallway.

"Ah-- ! "

Haruka instinctively woke up.

She must have been awoken by Haruka's scream when her pajamas changed into the bustier. And after she noticed she was alone, Kuzuha would of came to look for us. Then by chance stumbled into Akatsuki's room.

"Hmm... Where...?"

Kuzuha rubbed her eyes, she still seemed to be sleep.

Perhaps, because of Kuzuha's current state she doesn't realize she was even in Akatsuki's room.

.....No, not good this was far from good....!

Haruka was shivering because of the horror of the rapidly deteriorating situation. However the half asleep Akatsuki obviously doesn't care.

"-- ! "

"How was it that you were excluded? Come over here, Kuzuha I can teach you through experience."

Out of the question, absolutely can't sit by and let this tragedy occur.

So.....

The delirious Nanase Haruka stretched out her arm. Then readily grabbed the closest hard object.

Akatsuki was hit on the back of his head, knocking him down.

A heavy thud echoed around the house.

Part 18

A few minutes later --

".....Th-this terrible test of courage once is already enough."

Haruka was gasping for breath in her skintight corset.

The scene on top of the bed, looked like a field where heaps of corpses were scattered all over.

To think a test of courage would lead to such a tragic outcome, Haruka couldn't help get a headache again.

Miu, Listy, and Chikage were still in a trance, with an expression of ecstasy on their faces.

Akatsuki after being hit on the back of the head with the marble clock was unconscious.

And alongside the four of them was Kuzuha gently sleeping curled up in ball.

"Umm..... Where should I start?"

Haruka was at a loss.

For now, I should dress the naked Miu and the others?

Or first, should I take them back to other room?

Or restrain Akatsuki with something to put an end to the danger?

I wonder, what on earth should I do?

It got pretty sweaty, for the time being I really want to borrow the shower.

"Oh dear....."

In a situation like this, that was the only thing I could say to myself.

So Nanase Haruka sighed.

"The only upside..... might be that our bonds have furthered."

Chapter 2 - Crossroad of Ideas

Part 1

Babel was responsible for management of all things related to alternate worlds.

Deep within the campus resides the engineering sector that studies the knowledge and technology of said alternate worlds.

That was where they combine technology from this and different worlds to develop new technologies that was unfathomable by current scientific standards.

The next day after the slumber party at the Ousawa home.

Akatsuki had left the house early in the morning to come to the engineering sector.

The purpose was to get Sleipnir checked out.

"It should be somewhere in this direction"

Akatsuki was causally driving down the road into the sector.

He was headed towards Kubota Kaito's workshop that visited once before.

The other day in the middle of the night -- Akatsuki was out driving Sleipnir around town.

When it just so happened that the convenience store he stopped at was robbed. Furthermore the criminals abducted a woman.

Upon arriving at the scene, Akatsuki pursued the getaway car. He eventually caught up with the kidnappers and saved the female hostage. In the process he destroyed their car and tossed several of the kidnappers into the ocean.

However, while pursuing them Akatsuki did the unthinkable. He drove Sleipnir on top of the water, not just the shoal of a beach but over several hundred feet of water.

Sleipnir was able to travel beyond the speed of sound with no obstructions at sea level -- because of those two factors, he achieved the unimaginable.

And Sleipnir lived up to Akatsuki's expectations. The motorcycle ran across the ocean as stable as a Mercedes-Benz driving on an asphalt road, and finally even climbed over the precipice of a cliff.

Akatsuki marveled at the spectacular performance of Sleipnir, deepening his attachment towards it.

After returning home Akatsuki immediately thoroughly washed Sleipnir to avoid any corrosion caused by the seawater.

However, there was a limit to the maintenance that could be done by an amateur.

If you really want what was best for your vehicle, a professional was needed to look at it on a regular basis.

"I won't find a gas station mechanic able to inspect it."

The motorcycle's body was made of orichalcum, and was powered by spirits rather than gasoline.

Only an expert with extraordinary knowledge would be able maintain Sleipnir.

And there was only one person in the special autonomous region that Akatsuki could leave it with.

"..... Ah, I finally made it here."

In front of an Showa era inspired automobile factory, Akatsuki parked Sleipnir.

"No way... there is no one here."

Since it was now spring break for JPN Babel almost no one was on campus. At the entrance he asked the security guards about the circumstances. Apparently there was a large-scale system update tonight, and he had also said there was only a handful of staff members still on campus.

Akatsuki wanted to make sure he wasn't wasting a trip, so he had asked the guard to check the online database to confirm whether or not Kubota was on campus, and for the time being at least he was in his workshop.

"Eh..... Where are you old man?"

Although he was usually in his small workshop working on one of his hobbies, Professor Kubota was also in charge of Babel's special systems, which he designed. It was extremely likely that the Professor was in a conference or conducting some kind of research somewhere else.

Therefore Akatsuki cleared his mind, and searched the surrounding area for signs of life using Renkan Keikikou.

As long as Akatsuki meets with someone once, he will basically never forget their Ki.

".....Good, seems to be no problems."

In front of the workshop Akatsuki was able to sense a familiar Ki, he was convinced Kubota was here.

"Old man, I'm coming in."

Without waiting for a reply, Akatsuki went into the workshop.

Once inside he saw a person he met before. The young man wearing overalls also noticed Akatsuki's presence.

"Oh, Ousawa-san long time no see."

"Hey -- is the old man around?"

"I think he is in the back right now. Is there something you need ?"

"Ah, I just wanted to have the old man do some maintenance on Sleipnir."

Akatsuki raised his thumb over his shoulder pointing -- outside the workshop.

"There is something he is working on right now, but I can go ask the old man, okay?"

Part 2

-- Please wait here a minute."

The youth wearing overalls disappeared into the back of the workshop.

However, Akatsuki was not left there all alone.

In fact, before Akatsuki arrived the youth wearing overalls was talking to another person.

So

"Yo Akki. Did you specially come here to ask the old man for maintenance? Also, it's unlikely that you did something reckless, right?"

The previous visitor was Kaidou Motoharu. With a friendly smile he raised his right hand as to say hello.

When Akatsuki searched the workshop for Kubota's Ki, he had also sensed Kaidou's.

"You flatter me....."

Akatsuki returned with the same smile.

"The other evening you abducted an underage girl off the street, indeed that is just a little matter."

"A misunderstanding, it really was a misunderstanding. I think the entire world believes the man who followed us is a bigger pervert, right? I walk a pure line."

"So an underage girl forced you into a dark alley, this is your so-called pure line. "

Akatsuki had a conversation with Kaidou in the back alley, and he remembered the appearance of young girl go-getter.

Then.....

"Believe it or not, she is in fact several years older than you or I."

"..... Seriously?"

"Of course it's true. You should know you can't judge a woman's age from her outward appearance. Even you know that, right Akki?"

"Ah, well."

Kaidou's did have a somewhat convincing argument.

But Akatsuki couldn't imagine that that petite girl was actually older than himself.

..... That means, Cecil may be a couple of years younger than me.

Akatsuki recalled an encounter that night with a peerless beauty. The probability was low, but not impossible. Women really are devilish and mysterious creatures.

Akatsuki was lost in thought

"-!? Akki are you all alone today? Usually you have several woman attending to you."

"Several woman attending to me? Don't exaggerate so much."

Akatsuki couldn't help but smile while shaking his head.

"Izumi, Class Rep and the Vice President all spent the night at your house. It seems several people had a lot of fun, perhaps they are still in bed right now."

This morning when Akatsuki woke up, he went downstairs and found no one else was up yet. Even after he waited some time, they still didn't get out of bed. Without any other choice he cooked and had breakfast alone. Also before leaving he knock-knocked on their door, but still there was no response.

It seemed like nothing was wrong when he checked their Ki in the room, but just to be sure Akatsuki gently opened the door to confirm they were safe. He was surprised to find everyone lying side by side on the bed. They were all sleeping weirdly with something like a faraway look on their faces, probably because of a happy dream.

"..... It seems the Vice President has already left."

Early in the morning, he thought he sensed Haruka's Ki leaving the house.

And sure enough, when he entered the room Haruka wasn't there.

However, she left a note on the table saying she was otherwise engaged and had to leave early.

On the back of the note she had written "last night was really fun" and "thank you". Akatsuki was very pleased. It looked like Haruka decided to join their group, and last night wasn't all for nothing.

Through last night's party, they hoped to cultivate a strong sense of friendship.

But the last sentence she wrote, "Everyone defended with their lives!" was a little difficult to understand.

After he disentangled Chikage's heart, Akatsuki accidentally fell asleep and had absolutely no idea what happened after.

Maybe all of the girls played some sort of game of chance right after that.

Akatsuki drew two conclusions while looking at Miu's unladylike appearance as she was sleeping.

She must be dreaming about baseball or boxing.

"Oh, your relationship seems to be pretty good."

Kaidou laughed.

"— And by the way, I just saw the Vice President walked into the school building."

"Hmm so?"

"..... Huh? Akki, isn't your response a little too weak?"

"What do you mean?"

Akatsuki was slow to understand the situation.

"The other day..... when we met in town, you asked me if I was planning on killing the Vice President? and just now I said I saw the Vice President, could it be that you're not worried?"

Kaidou replied.

"..... Ah, now I get it"

Akatsuki said with a wry smile.

"And at that time, I made it clear that I didn't intend on making you into my enemy."

"..... I probably said something like that."

Kaidou thought Akatsuki's reaction was anticlimactic.

"You were actually very direct. Akki at that time..... the murderous intent towards me was really scary. I always thought you were somewhat skeptical of me, but now it seems that you sort of trust me?"

"Your thinking too much. If what you said is true, it is not necessary to worry. And if what you say is a lie, I would just kill you. No problems."

Kaidou dropped his shoulder feeling extremely disappointed, Akatsuki laughed "Oh",

-- Is it possible that it was just a lie?"

He stared at Kaidou with eyes filled with murderous rage.

But

Kaidou lowered his shoulders, dodging Akatsuki's glance while smiling wryly to ward it off.

"Come on Akki, I'm not stupid enough to tell you directly -- Ah!"

While in the middle of talking his cell phone started ringing.

Akatsuki couldn't see the caller ID on the LCD screen.

"Uwa....."

Kaidou had a slightly cramped expression as he glanced at Akatsuki.

"You don't have to worry about me, answer the phone."

Akatsuki motioned to Kaidou to pick up the phone.

The scene from the dark alley repeated itself, except this time the roles were reversed.

"You have a pained look. The caller seems to be a troublesome character."

"Yes, a very troublesome and scary women."

Kaidou roughly replied, and grudgingly pressed the call button.

"..... Hey, it's me. It's okay, you can..... before you called you should have already known where I am, and what is to be done, right? -- EH, What? You are a troublesome and scary woman?"

Kaidou was surprised, and momentarily matched Akatsuki's eyes.

"No, I would never say such a thing... ... Haha... ha..."

Then he turned his back to Akatsuki, letting out some dry laughter.

After Kaidou waved, he stated heading towards the back of Kubota's workshop.

He just watched as Kaidou's back disappeared from the other side of the garage.

Ousawa Akatsuki couldn't help muttering:

"Troublesome and scary woman... ... Sounds like that guy doesn't have it easy."

Part 3

Just as Kaido left, a burly man suddenly appeared in front of Akatsuki. He was wearing oil-stained overalls, and a little stubbly beard with a rough-hewn face.

At first glance he looked to everyone like an obstinate father figure -- Kubota the owner of the workshop.

".....I'm waiting."

Kubota coldly said, before going over to Akatsuki.

Then he went straight to Sleipnir parked outside the workshop.

He was not in a bad mood. Akatsuki knew that Kubota always had this type of attitude.

So Akatsuki nonchalantly followed behind him.

"I'm sorry old man..... Even during spring break, you must be very busy."

"I don't particularly mind. In the first place I handed it over to you, and I suppose I should be in charge of its maintenance."

"Can't thank you enough. I know nothing about machines. I would just have ruined it."

After walking outdoors, Kubota immediately started checking its condition.

First he looked over every inch of Sleipnir with the naked eye.

"..... You seem to treasure this like a baby."

"Would you? I ride up mountains and on top of oceans."

Akatsuki answered.

After all, he came to ask Kubota for maintenance mainly because of driving it on top of the water for quite some time.

Admittedly, it might be difficult say that he believed in Sleipnir's ability to take action, but not enough to cherish it.

But

"A professional technician at a glance can see what type of attitude the rider has towards their vehicle. You were a little rough , but not to the point of destroying it."

"Umm, I guess your right."

"The most important thing is that you enjoy the ride. Such intentions are transmitted to the machine. In particular this guy, who picks its owner. At least in my eyes, this ill-tempered and unruly guy is in a fairly good mood today."

"It is?"

"Hmph..... to be able to meet an owner worthy of trust you would also be happy."

Kubota said as he finished the visual inspection.

"There shouldn't be any problems..... but to be prudent I still want to conduct a detailed inspection. And by the way, you should take this opportunity to link with your AD as well. "

"Thanks, but why link with my AD?"

"Vice President Nanase should have given you a new AD, right ?"

"Ah, you mean this thing?"

Akatsuki pointed at his wristband.

-- It was the new type AD that Haruka gave him the other day before going to Alayzard.

Originally he needed seven AD's to activate his black magic sword, but now he only needed one.

The new model was originally going to be given out at the end of spring break -- the scheduled start of the new year for the students, but in the fight against Phil/ Zahhaku during the ranking tournament Akatsuki's older model AD broke. So Kubota had the new type of AD delivered to him ahead of schedule.

Kubota confirmed that Akatsuki was wearing the new AD.

"Both the old and new AD use the same telepathic stone as Sleipnir. The biggest difference between the old AD and the new AD is that the latter can lift restrictions according to the user's will, and has a new feature that allows your uniform or other clothes to transform directly into combat clothes."

"I have somewhat heard about that."

Akatsuki looked at the new AD.

"When she handed me this, I remember receiving a similar explanation from Haruka."

"In short, the new model reacts quicker than the old to the user's consciousness."

Kubota added.

"As long as the new AD and Sleipnir's telepathic wave lengths are synchronized to the same frequency, even if both are in separate locations, you can also convey your consciousness through the AD."

"You mean I can remotely control Sleipnir?"

"Yes."

Kubota nodded. Surprised by that, Akatsuki whistled.

"This seems to be quite a useful feature."

But

"This ferocious looking motorcycle driving unmanned down the road in the city is sure to terrify anyone passing by on the street. Probably the traffic cops would immediately be called to stop it."

"I can't deny the possibility, but this is a function that in case of an emergency you can call upon the power of this guy to help you weather the storm. At the same time, I believe this guy is happy to have this feature. Either way, it is up to you to determine whether or not is the right occasion to use it."

"Oh Well, please do that."

Akatsuki said while looking at Sleipnir.

"If this guy can have greater functionality, naturally it is going to be happier."

At the same time, Akatsuki handed over his AD to Kubota.

"About how long will it take?"

"That depends, however it seems your synchronization is still good, so it shouldn't take that much time. I'll do the adjustment and this guy's maintenance at the same time, but probably won't be done until this evening."

"Well that being the case, I guess I will have to find a place to pass the time."

Akatsuki bowed his head while deep in thought.

"....."

Suddenly, Kubota looked at Akatsuki, not saying a word.

".....EH? Old man what's wrong? Beating around the bush isn't your style. You're always unfriendly and stern, and do not hesitate to tell it how it is. I don't want to play a guessing game with you."

Akatsuki could not help but frown.

"Since idle is idle....."

Kubota still had on a poker face.

"In the spirit of saving some time why don't you assist me a little -- Ousawa Akatsuki."

Part 4

Akatsuki's was taken by Kubota to a facility built on the edge of the engineering sector. It had a gigantic open space comparable to the school's arena.

-- What is this place?"

"Its one of my labs mainly used to test each system."

"Oh after all Old man, your true identity is great professor of Babel."

Akatsuki said, as he looked round.

"..... So, why bring me to such a place? and what do you want me to do?"

"To test a newly developed combat program."

Kubota answered.

"You should have received combat training lessons, right?"

"Well, a couple of times."

Akatsuki said with a wry smile, suddenly remembered something.

"The first class training program went out of control and caused a lot of controversy."

The training program level was significantly increased to the point the students couldn't withstand the power of the summoned chicken snake beast they were to fight against. The program even refused to accept any commands until it finally went on a rampage.

It developed into a seriously dangerous situation as a lot of students fell victim to petrifaction though the cry of the chicken snake beast. When Akatsuki got wind of it in another arena next to that one, he rushed over to defeat the beast.

-- Of course, the person responsible was not the program's designer.

The student terrorist belonged to the same B class as Akatsuki, Tanaka. He intentionally set the program to go out of control.

-- What do you want me to do exactly? Test a new more stable training program?"

"It is indeed a fighting program, but it has nothing to do with practical combat training used for teaching."

Kubota operated the control panel set in the wall.

"The existing training programs focus on building team chemistry and acquiring practical experience. This new program's purpose is to enhance an individual's fighting capabilities. In order to avoid confusion, just call it an 'exercise program'."

"Hmm..... Okay."

In short, it was a physical education training program, or an exercise program like a sports club training activity.

Although the purpose of both was movement, compared to the former academic course, the latter focus was more on strengthening and developing an individual's ability.

However, Babel always divided them into groups, and the staff was unlikely to force a student to receive training. As long as a student gets enough basic educational subjects credits, their next phase of development was left to the student's discretion.

Therefore Babel school clubs were as varied as any other schools, big and small, liberal arts courses to the physical education clubs, as long as you were a student at Babel you could freely sign up and join any club. Of course, not belonging to any club was also allowed. Akatsuki was currently in the go home club

But the school also opens the training facilities during non-school hours for any students who wanted to enhance their

ability to fight and raise their class in the ranking tournament. Kubota had further developed a separate combat program for those individuals.

"-- No way, Are they going to mandatory enforce all students to become stronger from now on?"

The students and the staff in Babel certainly have the possibility of being dispatched as soldiers to the battlefield in case of an emergency.

However recently, COCOON's position as an administrator of the world was rock-solid, and the authority of Babel was also very high, there were now very little wars and conflicts around the world, almost no need to send in troops.

And Babel was an educational institution, not a military force.

At least nominally it was true.

"For a fighter like me, I have no objections. But for some of peaceful students that try to avoid fighting, even they must receive mandatory training?"

Akatsuki's tone revealed an obvious displeasure.

"No, you are mistaken."

The expressionless Kubota shook his head.

"But during the last ranking tournament, didn't an unidentified higher dimension being appear?"

".....Ah."

Akatsuki nodded. Kubota was talking about a young person who was sent after Miu from Alayzard, Phil Barnett. When Phil changed into a dragon he was defeat at the hands of Akatsuki.

"That Dragon, right?"

"Perhaps it was its considerable size, but when they suspended the tournament almost all the students and staff taking refuge saw that dragon flying over head. Although there were no eyewitness that Ousawa Akatsuki took down the dragon, rumors having been running rampant between the students and faculty"

Kubota said.

"As a result, a small number of students and staff have put in requests -- hoping to get stronger. Even if they can't defeat a dragon, or reach the same level as the Ousawa Akatsuki, if something happens they don't want to sit on the sidelines and watch."

After a short pause

"Do you understand? These people have been inspired by you -- Ousawa Akatsuki."

"Me.....?"

"Yes. You were the first person in Babel's history during the Norn screening to be screened as the "True Hero", and you are able

to stand toe to toe with the student council, and then during the ranking tournament you defeated a gigantic Dragon. A portion of the schoolgirls sees you as romantic interest, while some people acknowledge your strength and wish to emulate you."

After finishing setting up the controls, Kubota looked at Akatsuki.

"Ready. Come with me, I'll teach you what to do."

"I get that, and I think it's an honor to be the motivation for others to become strong, but in my heart I'm not all that happy....."

Akatsuki sighed, then he walk over to Kubota's side.

-- While in Alayzard, Leon was worshiped as the Hero and Akatsuki, the Rogue Hero, was just boy with a sword looking up to him.

..... Headache.

Becoming the target of worship was definitely not a bad thing.

However, the thought of his fighting spirit inspiring everyone, even a pacifist to strive to be like him. In his heart, nevertheless he felt a little sorry.

Akatsuki never claimed to be a Hero, in peacetime he would abandon it and deliberately vilify his own image. However, there will be still many young admirers who would enter the army, and lose their lives on the battlefield.

If you include the people Akatsuki doesn't know, the number should be quite considerable.

Becoming a symbol of hope was the inescapable fate of a Hero.

Due to their existence, the irony was that more people will lose their lives.

"-- I don't know how you will spend your time in this world, or what you will accomplish."

And Kubota said,

"As long as you continue to fight and continue to win, there undoubtedly will be more and more people looking up to you. In fact, you don't have to take responsibility for those people, or be concerned with how it effects the world, but --"

"..... I know."

Akatsuki nodded,

"I still have to be true to myself, and because of that I have no choice. Even if someone was to change because of me, I still can't run away."

In the end, what does it mean to shoulder someone else's feelings.....

Ousawa Akatsuki was already somewhat aware.

So he firmly said:

"The only thing I can do for them now is to continue being myself, and live up to their expectations."

Part 5

After roughly explaining to Akatsuki how to use the terminal to control the program, Kubota left the facility.

"It is a really strange development, huh.....Exercise Program."

Akatsuki smiled wryly.

Well good. Until Sleipnir's maintenance is complete, he has time to kill, so might as well take this opportunity to move around a little.

Therefore, Akatsuki looked around this place again.

This is a huge space, in addition to the special barrier that converts psychical damage to mental damage the ceilings, walls, and floors also seem to be covered with a barrier that absorbs physical damage and magic. Akatsuki tried to hit a nearby wall.

After a loud bang, he clearly felt his hand hit the wall.

But

"Not even a scratch, huh....."

It seems even if he went on a rampage the laboratory would be safe.

Akatsuki's AD is still having its wavelength adjusted, so he is currently wearing another AD provided by Kubota. He put on the new uniform he got from Haruka last night.

He hopes this will be a decent workout -- but it depends on the opponent.

-- Well, either way, lets get started."

Akatsuki turned to face the Control Panel on the wall.

In Kubota's exercise program, it seems you can select your opponents strength depending on the purpose of the exercise.

The system first measures the persons fighting ability, then change its strength accordingly. On top of that, there are another three modes to choose from.

"NORMAL" the strength of the fighter and opponent are equal. To win the fighter is expected to enhance combat abilities.

"EASY" the strength of the fighter is greater than the opponent. It is usually used for testing weapons or correcting war strategies.

"HARD" the strength of the fighter is weaker than the opponent. The opponent significantly increases its strength for a short period of time.

On default the system automatically choose the appropriate option, but fighter can choose the type of enemy.

Of course, because of Akatsuki's personality, naturally he want to do hard mode, but

"Ah, the Old man wanted me to test out the tutorial first. To test out the strength recognition software on a low-level opponent, a warm up then....."

Without a choice, Akatsuki reluctantly pressed the start button on the LCD screen.

Then numerous particles of light began to gather in the center of the laboratory.

The light particles gradually began to take shape, creating a gigantic bird much larger than normal.

He was looking at a cockatrice.[\[10\]](#)

".....Are you kidding me? A cockatrice? This level of a monster is supposed to be a warm up? Skip it. "

Akatsuki disapproved of the cockatrice, and went back to the control panel.

"Oh.... ... this one? Nah.... ... What about this?"

Akatsuki was still looking at the LCD screen, when the cockatrice suddenly screamed.

Low and heavy footsteps could be heard, the beast was approaching him at an alarming rate.

"-- Noisy."

Akatsuki used his AD to instantly summon a black magical sword -- the <Demon sword>.

He swung the sword down behind his back. The flash of his sword, instantly chopped the cockatrice in half.

"....."

It became particles of light and disappeared without a trace.

His AD also respond to Akatsuki intention to fight, and automatically switched his uniform to combat clothes.

"Oh..... these new clothes look just like the Demon King outfit I wore our there."

After countless battles in Alayzard, the AD determined these were the clothes most suitable for Akatsuki.

At the end of the tutorial a messages displayed on the screen.

"Give me a break Old man. This isn't a way to pass the time, its simply a waste of time, okay?"

With a bitter face Akatsuki continued with the control panel. He change the system to hard mode, and now is searching the list of opponents that would seems the most interesting to fight.

Goblin, ogres, orc, cyclops, minotaur, gryphon, cerberus.

The screen showed beasts in the same family as the cockatrice, but.....

".....Not interested."

These monsters levels aren't that much different from the cockatrice.

But still with the level monsters fighting it would be no fun at all. Since you want me to test it out, a strong one would be best.

"Nothing decent, huh.....?"

Perhaps further down the list the monsters will be stronger. After thinking that, Akatsuki advanced to bottom of the list.

The last monster was --

"What is thisUNKNOWN DRAGON?"

Akatsuki moved the cursor over it.

While hovering over the icon the detailed data was displayed, Alayzard's evil dragon Zahark.

"During the ranking tournament he must of secretly captured its data. "

"Hmm", Akatsuki forced a smile.

But according to Kubota, some the teachers and students who witnessed Zahark wanted to get stronger, this is probably why the

exercise program was born. It might be significant for them if Zahark were to be listed in the program.

And to Akatsuki, he was definitely a powerful enemy.

Plus in hard mode, Zahark's power undoubtedly will higher now.

"However..... to fight it right here?"

Akatsuki look around to confirm the size of laboratory.

It is a large space, but the space might be a little tight since Zahark was well over twenty meters. If it tried to spread its wings, it simply would not be able to fly around.

For others who wanted to challenge Zahark, the spatial conditions would be very advantageous to them. However in Akatsuki's eyes who wants a good challenge, it totally is not the case.

"That sucks....."

So Akatsuki scroll up the list again, scrolling all the way back to the first page. Until he was pointing the cursor over the Goblin's options.

"Really is useless....."

Akatsuki sighed, and once again moved down the list, returning to Zahark's options.

"Ah.... what's this all about?"

Akatsuki was stunned for a moment.

He press the menu and nothing happened, Akatsuki pushed it several times, then pushed the right and above options, etc., only to find at the bottom menu option was not Zahark, and there was a new screen never seen before.

"Hey, this is not broke, right?"

While staring at the screen he got an ominous feeling, unexpectedly at the top of the screen it read.

"DEBUG.....What is debug mode ? "

It is a special screen only for developers.

It seemed to be because of his indiscriminate actions, unfortunately -- correction, fortunate he hit the jackpot.

By changing the parameters of the program, you can intensity the strength of the program.

"The level limits... ... the difficulty... ... aha, ultimate mode. This looks like fun. "

Akatsuki also search around for some more interesting options, but didn't see any other.

"It seems like a hidden boss and not on the list.....--eh? "

Akatsuki noticed in the lower right corner of the screen in debug mode there was an unnatural data space.

"....."

Nothing was displayed on the screen, but he couldn't look away for some reason. He did wondered why there was such a thing, however it seemed like the space was calling out to him.

Akatsuki subconsciously move the cursor over.

Then he selected the blank space for some reason.

And simultaneously the the blank space now displayed a name.

"G · OUSAWA."

"This is"

A little skeptical, Akatsuki pressed the button.

Final confirmation -- YES.

After finally choosing, light particles once again gathered in middle of the laboratory.

Akatsuki's opponent soon appeared before his eyes.

If a person just met Akatsuki for the first time, they might be able to mistake him with this young person. The youth's appearance is almost exactly the same as Akatsuki.

His eye color, physique, hair, and even his fearless smile are a spitting image.

-- However, if you look closely there is little difference between the two.

The youth is slightly taller than Akatsuki, and his hairstyle is different.

Also he has a longer Japanese sword in his hands than Akatsuki

.

The youth isn't Akatsuki.

However, it is not a accidental resemblance. Ousawa Akatsuki recognizes the man in front of him.

Akatsuki slowly said:

"Father--"

Exactly.

His opponent was Akatsuki's father -- a young Ousawa Gouki.

Part 6

"So it turns out like this.....Now I see what Old man Kubota meant."

The time when Akatsuki attempted to tame Sleipnir

Kubota said he knew a little bit about Gouki.

.....Oh, that's right

Kubota and Gouki should be about the same age.

Those two people were both around Akatsuki's age, probably the same age of the Gouki standing in front of him, when they were summoned to an alternate world is just getting started. Babel had not been organized yet, and also there weren't that many people who returned from another world. At that time, if those two meet after going through similar circumstances, it would be very natural if they became friends.

"Okay, however that's not why I am here..... "

Akatsuki raised his Black Sword, and took a step forward.

He laughed a little.

"Even if it's just a computer program.....I will not miss this opportunity to compete with you! "

With a loud roar, Akatsuki made the first move.

He launch himself forward at full speed.

Closing the distance between the two in no time, then he put all his power into one strike.

But

The computer generated Gouki slightly waved his Japanese sword.

"Gakiiiiin--"

A metallic sound rang out as the Demon sword and Japanese sword slammed together.

"Uhh, Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!?"

Akatsuki's body was sent flying more than a dozen feet backwards.

It was too late for him to adjust his body in the air, he slammed into the wall.

"Gahhh.....!"

The strong impact in his back, forced all the oxygen out of his lungs.

He stop breathing for a moment, because of the special barrier there was no possibility that the wall was broken.

However the impact on the human body was not lost. Even so, Akatsuki withstood the pain and got off the ground.

"..... Aha, this is more like it."

Akatsuki laughed fearlessly.

His opponent is one of the most powerful people in the world, and is one of the people Akatsuki must defeat.

Even if this is a hopeless battle, he cannot pass on this a rare fight.

The difficulty of training programs adjusts according to the user's strength, In NORMAL mode the enemies would be evenly matched with the user. However, Gouki is part of debug mode, and appeared as a blank space. It is on a completely different level than the rest.

Then.....the different between himself and his father's power at that time was so much.

Ousawa Akatsuki doesn't actually know how big of a gap in strength there is between him and his father or his brother.

However

If he were to able to defeat a young version of his father, it would be tantamount to obtaining the right to challenge those two people.

But on the contrary, if he can't against a virtual opponent, let alone a copy of his father, there is no point. The genuine Gouki would have over many years accumulated much more experience, and is probably a lot stronger.

Plus it is safe to assume that his physical condition is unlikely to decline because of age.

At that very moment Akatsuki thought this was a fight he absolutely can't lose.

-- However, the spectacle that appeared before his eyes was incredible.

The Japanese sword in Gouki's hands disappeared, as if saying it does not need a weapon to face this level an enemy. The computer generated Gouki stood firm with a fearless smile.

"How dare you look down on me"

Akatsuki confronted the calm Gouki, unable to hide his inner anger.

"Good, I prefer using my hands anyway... ... Come on!"

He released his magic sword, and walk over to Gouki empty handed. And then at an arm's distance away he stopped.

"I'm a the challenger, so I get the first strike."

After saying that, Akatsuki immediately channeled renkan keikikou.

Concentrating all the kei inside his body into his right fist.

--Eat my fist, FATHER!"

He drives his right fist into Gouki's face.

"Bakii!"

A dull thud could be heard.

However, even after receiving Akatsuki's fist, Gouki never moved as much as one step from where he was standing.

He stood there grinning at Akatsuki, then in a similar fashion gave Akatsuki a right hook.

"Gah -- Gaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

He felt an acute pain running through his abdomen as he looked down at the ground.

However, he didn't see Gouki standing there.

"Crap -- Above!"

Akatsuki reflexively punches behind himself.

After a muffled bang, he clearly felt the impact of hitting his target.

However his attack didn't land, it was blocked.

Akatsuki turn around after his punch, only to see a furious Gouki with an impending kick awaiting.

He had no time to either defend nor evade.

Gouki's kick landed cleanly, smashing Akatsuki into floor with a vengeance.

Part 7

Kubota Kaito was watching the spectacle a little ways away.

After returning to the workshop, Kubota monitored the laboratory through a holographic image projected midair while silently doing the maintenance on Sleipnir and linking the AD.

"....."

He even saw Akatsuki accidentally enter into debug mode, Kubota never made a move. After all, Akatsuki choose it on his own.

Even if Akatsuki is at a disadvantage, even if he is in a life-threatening situation, Kubota doesn't have any reasons to stop it.

On the screen, Gouki was just standing there while Akatsuki was laying on the floor. He was slowly rising to his feet. Kubota was watching Akatsuki's expression, it was still composed and he not lost his will to fight.

".....Good."

Kubota muttered.

Not that he had asked him directly, but Kubota Kaito knows what Ousawa Akatsuki's goal is and what he is fighting for.

-- And perhaps what he will do in the future.

That's why, for the possibility of teaching Akatsuki he put in a debug mode.

"The goals you set for yourself and the ideals you set for yourself to live by... ... however only a very small number of people are able to keep that willpower. Ousawa Akatsuki, if you really are unwilling to compromise, if you really are unwilling to back down --"

Kubota pointed at the screen towards Akatsuki.

"That's a hero's aesthetica, the power to overcome all obstacles. At least that's how the man standing before your eyes did it."

He paused for a moment.

"Gouki's program is based on a tenth of his power during those days. Even if you beat a higher dimensional being during the ranking tournament comparable in strength, maybe even stronger. If you can't win against that Gouki, how can you possibly stand in front of that man now?"

Part 8

When Miu finally opened her eyes it was already noon.

However, that was not the reason she overslept.

It was because last night's "Test of courage" stimulation was too strong.

When Akatsuki was half asleep, he mercilessly gave the four pleasure until they collapsed from the bliss.

The girls were incapable of resisting, they had no choice but to accept it and fell into a deep sleep.

Only Kuzuha was able to escape the magic hands of Akatsuki, however it was Chikage that brought the essential oil that led to the drunken deep sleep state. The only exception was Haruka.

Haruka had woken up, and had already left the Ousawa home. She did leave behind a note however.

It said she borrowed the bathroom, and had a prior engagement to get to.

Haruka seemed to have escaped any damage of sexual berserker mode of the half asleep Akatsuki.

Miu herself didn't know how she did it.

.....Umm..... I can't remember much of anything.....

At that time with Chikage and Listy, Miu's body and mind were completely under the control of the raging storm of pleasure by Akatsuki. After losing consciousness, it was no wonder that she couldn't remember what happened last night.

Akatsuki had already got up before everyone and had gone out. She thought that he mentioned something about needing maintenance for Sleipnir, so now he should be Babel. However, the truth about last night is now more and more of a mystery.

-- However, at the bottom of the note, Haruka wrote "Everyone defended with their lives!" After reading that, Miu was comforted a little. Akatsuki did do other things, however she is afraid to find out exactly what.

"....."

Just when Miu was contemplating.

".....Ousawa-san?"

Suddenly, someone called her name. She turned and looked towards the voice to find it was Kuzuha. Miu quickly regained her awareness.

"Oh, s-sorry. It's nothing, I'm just staring into space....."

Miu had stopped moving her hands. Right now, Miu was combing Kuzuha's hair using a brush.

Because of Akatsuki teasing last night, everybody woke up with a lot of sweat. Like Haruka the first thing they did was have good bath. The four girls divided into two groups, the first was Miu and Kuzuha.

After they bathed, it was Listy and Chikage's turn to use the bathroom. Miu and Kuzuha were fixing their appearance.

.....She called me Ousawa-san, Ah

Miu stared at Kuzuha's back sitting in front of her, Miu concealed her inner regret.

After wake up this morning, she had gone back to how she normally calls her name. Apparently, it seem that she doesn't remember a thing from last night.

That was probably impossibility anyway. Kuzuha at that time got fairly drunk off the effects of Chikage's aroma. But, at last Kuzuha, who doesn't let out her feelings, expressed her true feelings. After finally learning her true feelings, she still couldn't do anything.

..... Of course not.

Miu nodded.

"Hey....."

She took the initiative to talk to her irreplaceable friend sitting before her:

"Kuzuha.....your hair is very beautiful."

Then,

"Huh--? "

Kuzuha turned her head back to look at Miu.

She had a slightly surprised expression, Miu sat there nonchalantly.

"Are you feeling alright, Kuzuha?"

This was the second time she called her by her first name with a calm tone.

However, since Kuzuha has no recollection of what happened last night, so Miu's move was very abrupt.

Kuzuha's inner desire had unexpectedly come true, and in that moment her cheeks turned red.

"..... No, nothing."

She turned her face forward looking somewhat embarrassed. After seeing such cute behavior, Miu put on a mischievous smile.

"Huh? Kuzuha, somehow your face is all red."

She softly hugged Kuzuha from behind, and lightly tokes her cheek.

Miu actions were implying that she also wants Kuzuha to call her by her name.

Then without a choice Kuzuha sighed.

"It's annoying to say nothing Miu."

Although the tone somewhat awkward, Kuzuha finally address her as Miu.

Then Miu smiled more brightly and pulled Kuzuha in closer.

No matter how precocious, Kuzuha is still just a kid.

-- And such a cute one at that.

Miu like a spoiled child began to tease Kuzuha.

"One more time Kuzuhaokay, I want you to call me Miu again."

".....Unpleasant, hurry up and help me with my hair."

"Unless you call me Miu. Come on, hurry up."

"Don't just push someone's head into your chest, okay? You cow ."

"Don't be like that! Your response is too cold now!"

Kuzuha said in a awkward way, Miu instinctively raised her voice resentful.

At this time

--Help, save me!"

The living room door suddenly flung open, and Listy ran in only with a bath towel.

"L-listy-san what happened? "

Miu asked, however Listy only blushed.

"Chikage said she wanted to wash my back, but then —"

"Oh....."".....It's not surprising. "

Both Miu and Kuzuha somewhat understood, as their eyes met for a second.

"There was no need run out so fast, was there?"

Chikage also followed wrapped up in a towel with a wry smile on her face.

After seeing Chikage, Miu can't help thinking--Chikage really had changed a little.

Maybe some weight came off her shoulder's, she looks happier than she was. Thinking back, Chikage has always been considerate of other people's needs. Although her behavior now seems to Miu a little unnatural.

.....Must be that person did something.

Miu let out an smile filled with trust.

Akatsuki didn't simply sexual harass everyone last night, rather created a situation in which everyone would have to band together with Chikage, through actions and words to completely free her heart.

The same way that person help Miu up till now.

While she thought "Thank you Akatsuki" in her heart, Miu can't help but say:

"Chikage-san that's no good.....because Listy-san isn't immune to that sort of thing yet."

"From the sound of that sentence, it seems that you have produced immunity, right Miu"

Kuzuha said, then.....

"Eh--" "Oh"

Listy and Chikage both noticed the change in Kuzuha at the same time, and both opened their eyes wide.

Chikage respond immediately.

"You said? Oh"

".....W-what?"

Chikage now has mischievous smile, as if finding a new toy to play with.

She leaned in close to reduced the height difference to Kuzuha eye level.

"Oh, hello there miss heartless, Kuzuha earlier you called Miu by her first name."

"Uhm..... If you don't mind, can I also call you by your first name."

Kuzuha face turned red as she looked away from the embarrassment.

"Chikage Like that, right?"

But

"With this perfunctory tone, how are you going to heal my broken heart?"



".....Then what do you want me to do?"

Kuzuha asked timidly while glancing up at Chikage.

"Well.....call me Chikage-oneechan in a exceptionally cute voice."

".....O-okay. You can get lost right now, stupid."

"Wow, rebellious."

Chikage smiled wryly, then shrugged her shoulders and stood up immediately.

"Listy, we haven't finished washing yet, come back to the bath with me."

"B-but wait..... Chikage ? "

Chikage ignored the confused glances from Listy, and grabbed her by the shoulders and forced her out of the living room.

While watching them interacting in their own way, Miu mumbled: "I'm glad" "

Letting Chikage organize a sleep over here, really was the right decision. It looks like everyone got closer after all.

The only regret is probably that Akatsuki and Haruka aren't here right now.

Miu really wants to stick out her chest and loudly tell Akatsuki.

We've become really good friends.

But

".....I wonder if Haruka is all right?"

Kuzuha heard what Miu muttered, anxiously she said:

"She said she was going to be over latter, but her friendship with the other members of the student council should be deeper than with us. If a student Council Member strongly urge her to stay, I don't know if she'll change her mind....."

-- Don't worry about it, Kuzuha."

Miu said so in a assertive tone, because she had an absolute confidence.

Last night we promised to support and help each other from now on.

At that time, in Haruka's eyes wasn't a hint of hesitation nor a lie.

Part 9

Early in the morning when Haruka Nanase left the Ouswa home she made a promise to herself to return.

On the very top floor of JPN Babel was the student council's room.

Currently there was only Haruka inside.

It was already past noon, as Ryohei and Minami were out for lunch.

Although they both invited Haruka, she had turned them down

In order to protect Akatsuki, and to protect her other friends Haruka was finally going to fulfill the commitment she made to herself after returning from Alayzard.

On her desk sat a plate with her name and her official position on it.

"-- By doing this..... it will be over."

Haruka said as she shut down her computer.

After she was sure that the computer was completely off, she quietly sighed.

Haruka looked around at the items on her desk --

All this in three days, while performing the duties of the student council, she compiled the data by herself.

Who ever takes over after me, will be able to quickly adapt with these documents and materials.

The documents were printed out put in a folder, a folder was saved on a flash drive, and also there was a system backup on the network server.

"Then"

Haruka clutched her left breast.

Her uniform had a breast pocket, in which was an envelope.

In a little while, Kyouya will appear in the student council room

Over the past few days, Kyouya also seemed particularly busy and she did not have the chance to properly talk with him. But yesterday before she went to the Ouswa home she fortunately met him in the hallway. Kyouya had said when he had time to spare he promised to talk with her.

After Haruka looking at her wrist watch, she slowly stood up from her chair and looked around the room. At the scenery she got so used to seeing.

It is place that Haruka Nanase will cherished forever.

"It's laughable.....me resigning. I am reluctant to leave me this place, but it is for the best."

Haruka said, with a wry smile.

The student council vice-president and the discipline chairman, were the important positions that Haruka Nanase held in JPN Babel.

Before Kyouya was a member of the COCOON, who managed this world, he asked her to join the student council -- Haruka immediately accepted the invitation.

-- The young boys and girls who are summoned to alternate world obtain special abilities when they return.

They are the hope for a better future for mankind, however they possess powerful abilities that some people view as extremely dangerous. Their situation can be said to be very difficult.

No matter how reluctant, alternate world returnees cannot change this fact.

To protect the returnees special institutions exists in each country of the G7, just like the special autonomous region of Babel.

COCOON in essence oversees Babel. COCOON regardless of its age is active in the political arena of each country in the world. Their status in Babel is not just a student, but rather chief executives of the plan for the world.

COCOON provides assistance to administer Babel, and all of them are adults.

-- But, throughout the Babel's all over the world the only exception is JPN Babel. Hikami Kyousa did not have to throw away his status as a student, and conducts the management of the organization as a student council president.

Babel protects practically only boys and girls in their teens.

Moreover, these teenagers were suddenly summoned to alternate worlds with no warning. They had to struggle to survive, and desperately fight to find a way back home. After they barely manage to get back to their original world, they are forced into special autonomous regions.

For physically and mentally immature adolescents this is undoubtedly a cruel fate. Only a person in the same situation can begin to understand their inner pain.

In order prevent those returnees from being hurt any further she wanted a student or staff member with a similar viewpoint in charge of Babel's operation, and he was exactly her idea of the perfect candidate.

So when Kyousa asked her, Haruka did not hesitate to join the student council.

If her own power and effort could help their plight even a little -

Naturally she put her whole heart and soul into it.

Haruka secretly swore.

In addition to the post of the Vice President, she voluntarily took the initiative to be part of the discipline committee. She does not want to see returnees get lost in their own power, or for them to feel inferior and feel that the future is bleak. In an attempt to reduce fights even a little between students, and as the president of the discipline committee she voluntarily stood on the front lines.

She has never regretted how she got to this point, and that wont ever change even in the future.

Haruka Nanase can only boast about her time spent as a member of the student government.

In fact she will continue to use her power to protect all of the students.

.....But

Haruka closed her eyes, and silently shook her head.

Now, she wants to protect other people.

Also in her heart, she has a new dream.

Ousawa Akatsuki -- Ousawa Miu -- Listy Sherfied

As well as herself, Izumi Chikage and Doumoto Kuzuhais are committed to protecting those three.

She decided to work as one with them, and fight alongside them.

So I don't belong here anymore. After all, concealing Miu and Listy's true identity is in clear violation of policies of Babel and COCOON.

And even if she is on a different path, the members of the student council are still important companions to Haruka. She doesn't want to lie in order to stay near them, that would be tantamount to betraying them.

-- When people in key positions in Babel leave the Office, in order to prevent confidential information from leaking out, magical seals are placed on those memories.

These magical seals can never be removed.

However, Nanase Haruka doesn't care.

When she first joined the student council she was informed on the matter. This way, there will be no doubts of her betraying Kyoushi, all of concerns about Haruka would be dealt with.

So in order for her to protect Akatsuki and others with pride it was a necessary step for Haruka.

-- And at last, the moment had finally arrived.

The door to the student council quietly opened.

JPN Babel's student council president, and one of COCOON's supervisors of the world -- Hikami Kyoushi walked in.

Part 10

"Hello, were you waiting long?"

When he saw Haruka, Kyouya to put on a smile.

"Not really. The student council President sure is extremely busy. There was still some work left, and I have been using the time to finish it."

Haruka said, and while standing next to her desk,

"I'm sorry, that the President had to take the time out of his busy schedule to come here."

"No harm. You have something important to tell me?"

At the same time as Kyouya asked that he started to move away from the entrance of the room.

Kyouya took the lead, as Haruka waited for him to pass by before she followed after him. He went to the far end of the room, and sat at the desk for the student council president. Kyouya then urged Haruka, standing across the desk, to continue.

-- So, what's the urgent matter?"

"Yes"

While nodding, Haruka pulled out a prepared envelope.

Then she placed the envelope on the table -- in front of Kyouya.

Written on it were the words "Letter of resignation."

"..... When you mentioned you had something important to discuss with me, I had an inkling of what you wanted."

Kyouya just sized up Haruka's envelope. He said in a calm tone that beforehand he expected this possibility. He had no intentions of opening the envelope.

"Can I hear the reason?"

Haruka lowered her head, when Kyouya looked up at her to ask.

"I'm sorryIts purely for personal reasons."

Haruka was looking down at the table, deliberately evading Kyouya's line of sight.

"..... That's regrettable."

Kyouya's response was also very brief.

After a short pause, he continued to say:

"Nanase-kun, you are an excellent Vice President and Chairman of the discipline committee. During this crucial time it is undoubtedly a great loss for the student government -- No, it is a great loss for JPN Babel. Those are my sincere thoughts, and not an exaggeration."

He said that while watching Haruka's expression to see if there was any chance she was willing to reconsider.

Then,

"I'm sorry I'm very happy being so highly praised by the President and I'm very honored, but....."

Haruka gently shook her head.

".....It seems that you are firm in your resole."

"Yes, this is a decision I made after careful consideration."

Haruka looked Kyouya in the eyes, and firmly expressed her own will.

Her decision to resign was her own choice, and it was also the path she wanted to take.

"....."

After Kyouya heard that, he became silent for a moment.

"Well then I have no choice, but to respect your wishes."

With a wry smile Kyouya picked up Haruka's resignation.

"..... So the folders on the desk are the necessary information for your successor?"

"Yes. The red folder is for the new vice president, and the blue folder is for the new chairman of the discipline committee."

Haruka continued,

"The reason for the two folders is that not necessarily will the successor be the vice president and be the chairman of discipline committee, so"

"I'm grateful. You certainly are an excellent talent to the end."

Without a choice Kyouya stood up, he changed his bitter smile into a smile.

"Thank you for your support until today, and all the hard work you put in."

Kyouya stretched out his right hand. It seemed to be a replay of the scenes when Haruka was invited to join the student council.

Then.....

"Here...."

Haruka slowly took Kyouya's right hand.

Shaking his hand.

"To be able to work with the president was an honor."

After the farewell handshake was complete.....

"I am going to accept this resignation, however I won't process his right now."

Kyouya also said,

"As you know, the student council is currently preparing for the upcoming system update tonight. Coupled with the memory seal formalities, you must wait until tomorrow to be formally relieved of your duties."

"Yes, that will be fine "

After Haruka nodded, she picked up the succession folders and return to her desk.

--Oh, and Nanase-kun."

Kyouya suddenly called out to her.

"Something wrong president?"

Haruka turns back, Kyouya had a wry smile.

"In fact, there is one thing I would like you to. I know tomorrow you will be formally resigning so making such a request is a little awkward, but I hope you don't mind."

"It doesn't matter, is it about confirming the readiness of the system update?"

It was work that can be done in the morning together with Ryohei and Minami.

He took for granted that she would continue to work on that other matter.

The fact was Haruka already made up her mind. After all, the preparation before the update such as the confirmations were already done, also any work related to the end of the semester. She didn't want to delay her resignation any further.

But

"No.....Ryohei and Minami-kun can handle tomorrow afternoon's unpleasantness."

Kyouya also denied what Haruka was thinking.

"I would like you to do another job Today is good if you have the time, please?"



"Eh? Currently I have no other prior arrangements. If it is within my abilities, then please tell me what the president wants me to do."

Haruka was puzzled as to what Kyouya intended for her.

"I'm grateful, then I won't stand on ceremony."

Kyouya floated a smile.

Haruka slowly asked what her last "work" was.

Chapter 3 - Still just facing Forward

Part 1

In the laboratory of Kubota Kaito several hours have passed, since the exercise program started.

However, the fight between Akatsuki and programmed Gouki wasn't over yet.

Gouki's strength and toughness were superior to his, while his speed and reaction time was not far off from Akatsuki's. Once he was able to realize this, it was possible for Akatsuki to design an effective fighting strategy.

Although you can't say they were completely evenly matched, but still Akatsuki barely fought to a draw.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

Akatsuki let loose his fighting spirit with a loud roar, and created innumerable amount of huge energy bombs. All of them were released towards Gouki at the same time.

The energy bombs approached Gouki from all directions. He just countered with both of his fists.

The pressure from his fists compressed the air around them into bullets that intercepted Akatsuki's energy bombs.

Scattering the energy bombs into flashes of light.

"Then take this one!"

Akatsuki used the light as cover to instantly close the gap between the two, and without any hesitation he hurled his right fist at him.

"Bakii"

A shock wave rang out as it landed.

But

-- Uhh!"

Akatsuki shook his head immediately.

Gouki's fist pierced through the air, "vuun" sounded as the power shot through the air grazed Akatsuki's cheek.

Akatsuki only felt a slight burning sensation on his cheek. However after waving his fists around Gouki's left his stomach wide open.

Six high-speed punches landed repeatedly.

But as Akatsuki drew back his fist preparing for a finishing blow -- Gouki grabbed his arm.

While thinking he had won, he had already been slammed into the floor.

"Guuuuh"

There was no time to protect himself from that attack, severe pain ran throughout his whole body.

However, Akatsuki didn't have the chance to even breathe.

By rotating the power in his arm with back of his neck and shoulders he was able to immediately propel himself up to his feet. Narrowly avoiding Gouki's crushing stomp to the top of his head.

He was able to separate several steps away from Gouki.

"Damn this is getting me no where."

Akatsuki bitterly spat out.

Since the fight began, his opponent never let up even for a second.

In a fist fight against someone stronger than yourself any careless mistake can lead to an irreparable end.

Therefore, Akatsuki both physically and mentally accumulated a substantial amount of fatigue.

Meanwhile the other was only a computer created program unaffected in any way.

In addition, Akatsuki hit his opponent many times, and it seemed it didn't cause any real damage to Gouki.

Normally Akatsuki's fists and kicks were sufficient to stop an enemy, but

Am I still..... not strong enough to deal with Father?

Akatsuki couldn't help but clench his fists.

"-- In that case, I will have to keep hitting you until it works."

While laughing, Akatsuki once again sprinted towards Gouki.

Part 2

He completely changed his footwork, rapidly stopping and sprinting continuously.

By alternating between the two within a short distance Akatsuki created afterimages of himself.

Following the series of high speed movements he launched an array of attacks.

"Uuuuuooooooooooooooo"

The attacks came from both sides, and collided at almost the same time.

They were both in each others range to attack. Akatsuki and Gouki speed was considered unimaginable to others, the kicking and punching speed was a gorgeous feast to eyes.

-- If this was a game, you could analyze the combat algorithm to identify the optimal strategy to fight. But, the creator of Gouki's program didn't standardize his AI.

He was a master swordsman, a world class boxer, even a high level magic user. His attributes were similar to the real Gouki, but his knowledge was no where near the same.

There was no set battle mode, so it freely and irregularly changed.

Coincidentally, Akatsuki fought precisely in the same manner.

He was currently concentrating on finding out a way to effectively strike his opponent, while warding off against those incoming highly destructive attacks.

An incredible amount of consideration was needed every moment just to determine how to avoid the next attack and remain unhurt. In a split second he had to continuously and subjectively make the best choice. But at the same time, Akatsuki still had to think about the other variables.

Gouki was obviously stronger than him -- he had to think about how to fight someone like that.

Unavoidable attacks slowly became dodgeable.

Indefensible attacks were gradually becoming preventable.

Attacks that couldn't hit gradually hit.

His thinking and senses gradually sharpened.

Fancy moves and unnecessary movements gradually faded.

Every attack sublimated into near-perfection.

There were no mistakes. Even if not by much his strength was steadily growing.

By fighting an opponent who surpassed himself, and even if he was risking it all, his present self can do nothing but get stronger.

He attacked and defended, and attacked and defended.

Making effective use of his whole body he developed an unprecedented continuous offensive.

He also used variations of each combinations of faints, a feint for the conscious, a feint for the eyes, and a feint for the subconscious.

By fully understanding his own strengths and weaknesses, he was able to develop new tactics accordingly. He was creating a new way of fighting that exploited his opponent's AI.

Then he started to calmly think --

..... Why?

Akatsuki felt a trace of anxiety.

Albeit a program of a young Gouki it was still a powerful enemy.

He should now be stronger and have reached a new level again.

The other party before him was definitely more talented than Akatsuki.

Perhaps, the same goes for his elder brother Sakuya. However that didn't mean he was reluctant to face them, because of such a power gap. Akatsuki absolutely doesn't want to lose to those two.

And it wasn't always the strongest who wins.

Even if a stronger enemy exists, he will not tolerate defeat or escape.

Above all, fighting only when the other was weaker than yourself was the same as running away.

The founder of the world's most powerful terrorist group -- Crimson Twilight.

The people who manage the world's most powerful army -- COCOON.

When confronting those two enemies, Akatsuki will be forced to challenge opponents of a higher level.

However, he was okay with that. After all, for a chance at winning the only thing needed was the will to fight.

But even so,

..... Why?

Ousawa Akatsuki couldn't suppress his inner emotions.

That man in front of his eyes had that much power -- then I wonder why he was unwilling to help Miu?

Part 3

Ousawa Miu.

Akatsuki brought her back from the alternate world Akatsuki, rather brought Myuu the Demon King's daughter back.

That name originally belonged to -- Akatsuki's real little sister Ousawa Miu.

Perhaps her fate was not bound by how strong she was. But even if that couldn't be changed, he would at least make it personnel.

If all he could do was be near her side, at the very least he would not let her feel lonely.

Miu wanted to save Sakuya, who was on the verge of losing all control. Gouki's strength at that time would have easily stopped Sakuya -- Akatsuki however had yet to be summoned to an alternate world and could do very little.

Although Sakuya was not part of COCOON at that time, he was already one of the strongest in the world.

Gouki was also one of the strongest in the world, and could have stopped Sakuya.

However, Gouki didn't come back home until it was over.

After all -- Sakuya was stopped from losing all control when Miu broke free from Akatsuki and in front of both Akatsuki and Sakuya's eyes -- she took her own life.

She was unwilling to see her two older brothers endlessly fight over her.

Her final words -- 'This world is wrong.....'

Part 4

After that, Sakuya was chosen to be part of COCOON and became a manager of the world.

As for Gouki he still never came back home.

So

"Why What the hell was your reason?"

Fuming with rage Akatsuki gritted his teeth and grabbed Gouki by the collar.

This was obviously an unnecessary move in a fight — to expose your weaknesses to an enemy was an act of stupidity. If there was such an opportunity it would have been better to launch an attack.

What was more that wasn't his father in front of him. It was just a computer program.

Even so, Akatsuki Ousawa could not help but want to ask to understand.

Then and now, what reason does Gouki have for never being there?

-- Of course, Akatsuki's anger won't reach a computer program.

Gouki lands a hard fist into his diaphragm.

"Guh, uuuhhhhhhhhhhh-"

The shock wave penetrated his body straight out through his back.

Along with the voice of agony, Akatsuki released Gouki's collar.

However, Gouki's attack didn't end there.

The computer program had long ago considered Akatsuki as an evenly matched opponent, and without the slightest hesitation went to pursue and attack. His right foot kicked Akatsuki into the wall, then in a flash ran over to give him a series of attacks.

"~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~!"

He was unable to dodge the punches to his gut. They were not light by any means, so much so that even making a sound was difficult. Under Gouki's continuous attacks, all Akatsuki could do was grit his teeth and prepare for the worst.

Then

The barrage of kicks and punches stopped. Akatsuki was left indented into the wall and unable to move an inch.

In the end -- Gouki put all his power into his right fist and let it loose on Akatsuki face.

BANG! A powerful blast wave that shot into the wall through Akatsuki shook the whole laboratory.

"-----"

"....."

Gouki turned and walked away.

While Akatsuki crumbled down off the wall to the floor like a broken doll.

Part 5

Not long after Chikage and Kuzuha had returned to their homes.

Miu Ousawa was greeting a visitor at the door along with with Listy.

It was a teenage girl -- Haruka Nanase, who became a close friend of Miu's.

However, when Haruka once again went to visit the Ouswa home she looked rather gloomy.

Both of them invited her in, while passing through the living room they heard why she was here.

So

"The student council president is looking for me?"

Miu heard the situation from Haruka, and puzzled she had unintentionally raised her voice.

Haruka who was sandwiched between Miu and Listy on the sofa made a bitter expression.

"Yes..... He said he had some things that he wanted to talk to you about. I hope you can go to JPN Babel to meet with him."

"That person is a manager of the world, and part of COCOON right?"

Listy made a serious expression.

"Did he discover Miu's true identity?"

"....."

Miu fell silent after hearing what Listy said.

Listy's speculation was not impossible.

When spring break arrived, Miu and the others went to Alayzard, where they spent about an entire month.

The reason was to stop the war between humans and demons.

After much effort, they finally collectively managed to get a peace treaty signed, and then returned to this world.

However, the reason Miu was prompted to go to Alayzard was because someone was sent after her from Alayzard -- Phil Barnett.

He not only threatened the staff, but destroyed the special barrier system that converts bodily damage into mental damage to infiltrate JPN Babel's ranking tournament. After Akatsuki drove off Phil, and once again saved Miu. Phil then changed into a huge dragon because of a contract he made with the evil dragon Zahhaku in Alayzard. The battle then moved from the training grounds to the city streets where Chikage, Kuzuha, Haruka and the other student council members fought the dragon.

Akatsuki at the time was poisoned and temporarily unable to fight. When he finally recovered, he rushed over to save Miu and the others. He single handedly defeated Phil in form of a dragon, ending the earth-shattering battle.

-- A month had passed since then.

However, time in this world doesn't pass when you were in an another world.

In this world only about a week has passed since the ranking tournament.

In the middle of the turmoil, JPN Babel learned that Phil Barnett was trying to capture Miu.

Immediately after the incident, Akatsuki and Miu were subjected to questioning from an investigation committee. Miu ultimately got away with the story she made up along with the Akatsuki. But the possibility that Kyouya found some evidence had to be considered.

Of course, Kyouya was in charge of school in JPN Babel and part of COCOON, perhaps he simply wanted to hear it from Miu.

..... What was the President after?

Miu was at a loss as to what to do.

There weren't any problems if it was the latter. All she needed to do was repeat the same story she told to the investigation committee to Kyouya.

However, if Kyouya discovered Miu's true identity

That Miu was from an alternate world, she most likely would be arrested.

However there was still the possibility that Kyouya just wanted to hear from Miu, herself. In that case, she was overacting and causing herself unneeded stress that might cause him to become suspicious.

"Haruka-san, do you know what the student President wants of me?"

"I also..... asked why it was so important for the President to meet with you, but..... "

To Miu's question, Haruka gave an apologetic look.

"I have resigned from the student council, and don't know too much. I was only told to try and get you as quickly as possible I'm sorry, I can't be of more help to you."

"Don't say that."

Miu quickly shook her head.

"Haruka-san, because you informed us in advance we now have time to prepare countermeasures."

"Yeah, that's how it is..... Haruka."

Listy nodded, and put her hand on Haruka's shoulder.

"If someone else suddenly came over and questioned Miu she might have exposed her identity and probably would have been taken away on the spot. Fortunately, you are here now and the worst situation can be avoided."

"Ah"

Haruka nodded, but still didn't look too happy.

The reason was very simple.

"The people who drove me here are waiting outside. They are the some of the President's most trusted aides and are also looking for you. So we can't hide in here forever."

"..... Uh huh."

Miu nodded.

Kyouya not only assigned Haruka, but as a precaution also assigned other staff members to accompany her. In fact, those staff members had intended to just barge into the Ousawa home. However as courtesy to Haruka, they were temporarily persuaded to wait outside. Therefore Miu didn't have much time to make a decision.

"....."

Miu took out her cell phone and called Akatsuki.

But it didn't connect. She heard an electronic voice 'the number you are trying to reach is not reachable, please hang up and try again.'

"..... He didn't answer?"

"..... Un."

Listy asked, while Miu just nodded.

She called him several times..... she didn't know if the timing was bad, but untimely she didn't get though to Akatsuki.

"..... I have tried several times, but Ousawa Akatsuki is not picking up."

"Then our only choice is to fend for ourselves."

Back in Alayzard, Miu also came across a similar situation.

During the decisive battle at Gorudono canyon, after Akatsuki sustain severe injuries in the battle with Leon. Miu had to stay in the safety of Forestnium. The patriarch Urumu had placed a conceptual barrier to protect the village. Then Disdiya and Leon sent a letter saying the Wandering forest would be burnt down if she didn't agree to leave Forestnium and become their hostage. Miu had no choice but to do something and ended up become Disdiya's hostage anyway. Fortunately Akatsuki stuck a transfer seal on her body, and was able to rescue Miu in the nick of time. Otherwise the consequences would have been unimaginable.

..... I do not want to cause any more trouble for that person.

After all, we all decided to work together to support Akatsuki.

So.....

"Umm, Haruka-san"

Ousawa Miu in a quite voice asked

Before making the decision she had an important issue.

"In your opinion..... Do you think that person can win against the President?"

Part 6

Akatsuki seems to have some unknown grudge with COCOON

It's clear from the fact that Akatsuki has repeatedly provoked Kyoya.

Also that Akatsuki feels he must sooner or later defeat Hikami Kyoya.

However COCOON is the manager of this world.

It is fine to challenge him in the ranking tournament, because Babel authorized it as an official fight. However on the other occasions when he challenged Kyoya, I am afraid that can be punishable by the death penalty. Akatsuki also is well aware.

That's why Akatsuki despite all provocations, he will not take the initiative to openly fight him. However it is not because he interested in saving his own neck.

.....Perhaps that person.....

Miu thought.

He didn't want to involve her in his dispute, and that's why Akatsuki was being cautious.

However she was not being conceited.

Back in Alayzard before the Demon King Garius died, he entrusted his daughter to the hero Akatsuki.

The Demon King's daughter is Miu.

And the rogue hero Ousawa Akatsuki would keep that promise he made to him.

Since that day, Akatsuki has helped Miu time and time again.

Whether it is when the training program went berserk, or when Phil Barnett/ Zahhaku attacked. He resolved them one after another

.

And--

Even still he had to save her from his best friend, the hero Leon Acperio, who was blinded by his hatred of demons. Of course, Akatsuki wasn't the only one who helped Miu at that time.

Listy, Haruka, and Chikage and Kuzuha were involved in the crisis, also Akatsuki without the slightest hesitation moved bravely forward.

I seem to be important to Akatsuki -- Despite the fact she is very happy, she also feels uneasy. If Kyoya hurt everyone, Akatsuki

would surely start an all-out war. If that happens, then who will be able to stop Akatsuki.

Perhaps then Akatsuki can't keep his cool, and lets out his animosity and confronts COCOON.

.....She only has two options.

Either accept Kyoya's request and go to JPN Babel.

Or refuse Kyoya's request and stay here and wait until Akatsuki returns.

There is no third option.

Its not just about Akatsuki, there are now other people.

The best option for everyone.

That's why she needs to consider the outcome if Kyoya and Akatsuki fight.

After all, choosing to stay here and wait for Akatsuki to return is undoubtedly going to lead to a war between the two.

"I --"

Miu still remembers the horror of the icicle that Kyoya made during the entrance examination.

Without particularly concentrating he created a huge icicle in the blink of an eye.

There wasn't a single crack after Akatsuki hit it.

Of course, at that time he was not necessarily that serious either.

But it is the same for Kyoya, he too was holding back his strength.

Miu believes in Akatsuki's strength, and believes that he will win.

He is stronger and more powerful now than when he confrontation father -- Galious. He has fought several times since then, and anyone can see that Akatsuki got stronger.

So, she doesn't think that Akatsuki will lose.

--However, this is after all just her wishful thinking.

Miu can't just decide this on her own based on her faith in him, she needs to make sure that Akatsuki won't be hurt in the fight with Kyoya.

When Akatsuki was stabbed and seriously injured by Leon, Miu's heart almost broke into pieces.

She suffered an indescribable pain.

.....She thought experiencing this once was enough.

Therefore Miu must eliminate all her emotions, and objectively measure everything.

She must know now, if Ousawa Akatsuki can prevail over one of the strongest in COCOON--Hikami Kyoya.

Part 7

"....."

Haruka after receiving such a serious question from Miu, meditated for a while.

Ousawa Akatsuki and Hikami Kyoya.

Haruka knew both of them, but who on earth is stronger?

For Akatsuki there is no lack of material to base his strength on.

First, outside of the Kubota's workshop she witnessed Akatsuki control Sleipnir beyond the speed of sound.

Then fought one on one with Zahhaku as well as a series of battles in Alayzard.

Akatsuki has demonstrated a tremendous ability to fight.

Haruka has also actually fought with Akatsuki.

They first fought as soon as they met in the student council room, and then on the first night of the ranking tournament. He can't use magic, but his strength is still undeniable.

In addition to hand to hand combat, the level of his swordsmanship is no laughing matter either.

--As for Kyoya?

Haruka has also witness Kyoya fight on several occasions. During combat training along with the other members of the student council, and during a few ranking tournaments. However, he never went all out. Since he is a member of the COCOON he must be really talented, and is basically an unknown.

.....Even so, his power was overwhelming.

From those glimpses she can only guess at his true strength.

Haruka tries to imagine the fight between Akatsuki and Kyoya. However they are very different from each other, and can't really be compared. So before making a conclusion, she first put forth her thoughts.

"There are many factors affecting the outcome of a fight. For example the location or time of day will cause different results. Based on what I have seen from Ousawa Akatsuki's past fights, losing really is hard to imagine. But--"

Haruka concluded:

--If you only compared them in strength, President Hikami is slightly above."

"....."

"....."

After hearing Haruka's answer, Miu and Listy fell silent and slightly lowered their heads.

However to Miu's question "Can that person win against the President?" Haruka didn't properly answer it.

Miu didn't feel that she was wrong and comparing them in terms of pure strength it is a simple way to exclude her emotions.

Then Miu slowly raised her head, and looked Haruka in the eyes.

"I understand, Haruka-san. Take me to see the student council President."

--Miu-chan ?"

Listy sitting on the other end of the sofa couldn't help but shout.

Then she stood up from the couch.

".....!"

But she couldn't say anything, because she also understands.

She doesn't know Kyoya's end game, and perhaps he merely wants to hear what happened during the ranking tournament. Therefore, if that's the case, it wouldn't be a problem as long as Miu goes.

But if she refuses the appointment, Kyoya is bound to be suspicious. In that case he will perform an in-depth investigation,

and it will inevitably lead to Akatsuki and Kyoya fighting. Moreover, and it won't be an official duel.

It will be a life-and-death fight, meaning the losing side would die.

It won't necessarily just be Akatsuki, who would be killed.

So Miu has no choice. She slowly got up while smiling.

"Listy-san, continue to stay hidden in the house. Unless that person or I come back, do not come out. Just to be safe, it is best to stay away from the windows."

Haruka stared at Listy, who was biting her lower lip.

Miu came to this world ahead of Listy, and has gradually built up place she feels she belongs. But it is different for Listy.

Of course, Akatsuki and Haruka have already proposed to Listy on how to explain her existence to Babel, while keeping her true identity hidden. Chikage and Kuzuha have also been informed and theoretically it should be sound.

However, the reason why the president wants to interview Miu remains a mystery thus far. The timing of this situation, and Listy's arrival may be the reason.

Haruka couldn't help thinking -- Listy would definitely feel a certain sense of chagrin and regret in her heart.

-- When they left Alayzard to come to this world the dimensional shift would have been detected by JPN Babel and recorded on the "Apocalypse" server.

Miu and Listy are the same as they both are from another world, however Listy's presence here stands out more than Miu's.

Since they don't know Kyoya's end game and Akatsuki is not here, there is no way anyone can say that Listy's presence was not exposed.

And

If she decides to stay inside to stall for time, they aids on standing outside will break ins, and then will find Listy here.

Akatsuki would be forced into a no-win situation.

In order to protect Listy, also in order to protect Akatsuki, Miu doesn't have any other choice.

"....."

That's all Haruka's could figure out, and suddenly was sullen and speechless.

"Wait a minute, I want to change my clothes. Not into the old uniform, but the new uniforms I got from you last night."

Miu looked at Haruka.

"Okay then, the new uniform has been designed to be relatively handy."

The new uniforms can change according to the users will automatically to combat clothes.

At that time regardless of a fight or escape, there would be a much higher success rate.

Miu then left the living room.

Haruka and Listy waited in the living room in silence.

But

-- Umm!"

After hesitating for a while, Haruka suddenly spoke up.

Miu called out half way down the stairs:

"Wait, I want to here the question too."

After Miu came back to, Haruka continue to say:

--Why do think I was going to ask a question? "

It was like a boulder was putting pressure on her heart when she was asked the question.

Her heart was pounding, resulting in a sense of distance from the others.

"I am part of the student council like Hikami. Maybe I'm just using your concern for Ousawa Akatsuki, and this is all a trick in order to get you to get you there... ... aren't you at least a little skeptical?"

Miu was dumbfounded for a moment, then revealed a gentle smile.

"If that is so, then why would you expose your scheme?"

"This was a desperate move, intended to win your complete trust."

"It is not necessary to say any more, after all, you made your point and now I feel uneasy."

"....."

Miu's face was very clam, but Haruka's face was covered with a layer of haze.

Haruka could not understand, how Miu could readily trust her so much.

Then

"Haruka-san..... You are really kind-hearted."

Miu slowly approached her.

After she stood in front of Haruka, her lightly put her hands on Haruka's cheek.

"It is best to take advantage of this opportunity to make one thing clear."

Miu intently stared into Haruka's eyes.

"Nanase Haruka, I completely understand you."

She said in firm and clear tone.

"You believe in yourself more than anyone, you adhere to your own justice, and always carry through to the end. There is no way you would be easily compromised. Even during the situation in Alayzard, you believed in us and fought with all you had. After returning to this world, you dedicated yourself to protecting my new home with all of your heart. And now you are standing in a place I can't even imagine because of Listy and me. Honestly, I can't find any reason to doubt you. So Please keep this in mind, and never forget."

She paused for a moment.

"No matter what happens, we will always believe in you."

Miu gently embraced Haruka in her arms.

As if trying to convey her thoughts through body warmth --

I will always believe in you.

".....!"

Miu clearly had unconditional trust in her, Haruka can not help but slightly tremble.

Tears almost burst forth from her eyes.

Adhere to your own justice, and choose your own path

It really is correct.

How to respond to this should go without saying.

Haruka shouldn't be apprehensive to Miu's words.

And respond to Miu's trust in her--that should be good.

Her tightly wrapped her hands around Miu, and she looked straight ahead at void.

Nanase Haruka must show her resolution.

"Then, I will also protect you."

Her voice was filled with strength.

-- At any cost."

Part 8

A few minutes later -- Haruka walk out of the front door along with Ousawa Miu.

Upon leaving the house, there was a black car from Babel parked in front. After seeing Haruka, the two men got out of the driver seat and the passenger seat.

They were the aids from JPN Babel that Kyoya dispatched.

"We were waiting for you, please this way."

One of them said while holding open the door to the back seat.

"No, we're going to take the monorail back."

Haruka said firmly, leaving no room for negotiation.

"You can go back first, I will take Ousawa Miu to the President."

The confined space in the car could be dangerous.

If the student council was aware of Miu's true identity, they could use an odorless and tasteless gas inside the car to knock them out.

"But --"

--What's the problem?"

The two aids objected, but was turned down by Haruka.

"President Hikami asked that I take Ousawa Miu to the student council, but he did not specify what vehicle must be used."

After coldly saying --

"Come on, let's go."

"Un....."

Haruka takes the nodding Miu's hand, and start walking toward the monorail station.

Then from behind,

"..... Please wait a moment. Let me confirm it with to the president."

One of the aids took out his cell phone, and made a call.

"Huh? There are no bars... ...I can't get a signal, how is that possible?"

"Umm, is it a malfunction? It can't be.....there's no one to blame but yourself for not properly maintaining the equipment. Time is precious, we need to get going."

Haruka gloated sarcastically, and began to walk away with Miu leaving the aids.

..... It is the same no matter how many times I try.

Haruka actually released a special type of lightning magic into the air, creating an electromagnetic waves around his body.

It's jamming radius is effective up to one km, all electromagnetic communications are blocked.

As long as the two aids stayed there they would never get through. They only waited for the first call to go through, Haruka and Miu had lost sight of them now. Whatever I choose this, so it is fine.

I've decided to protect Miu.

Haruka's determination can't be swayed.

Part 9

After receiving a series of attacks from the computer program in the form of Gouki, Akatsuki physical body actually received damage.

However

.....I can.....hate..... !

Akatsuki was crawling across the ground his consciousness was more and more vague.

-- If his consciousness gets any worse, the exercise program should automatically end. Continuing to fight could be life-threatening. He needs to give up his meaningless pride and admitted defeat.

After all, this Gouki is simply the exercise program using an analog that appears to be a person.

It is not a real person.

Still, he has definitely got stronger as he exchanged blows with his sword and fists.

The effectiveness of exercise program is undeniable.

As long as he continues to work hard, someday final victory will be his.

".....this Bull**** doesn't make any sense."

Ousawa Akatsuki sneered while slowly getting up from the ground.

His vision was blurry, he no strength left in his arms or legs.

His injuries were not light, his whole body was screaming from the pain. He was wobbling on his feet to the point of almost falling over.

But, Ousawa Akatsuki will not throw away his pride.

His eyes are looking towards his future self, and can't averted them from his present powerlessness.

Isn't this the same as back then, when he lost his little sister.

He started to recall. What he had lost, and what he had gained.

Back when he lost Leon in Alayzard.

Originally he thought he would fall into a abyss of despair, but yet he had to force himself to obtained power.

He had to master renkan keikikou's power, because he will never let a tragedy like that repeat itself. And yet, if he were to choice to give up now, wouldn't that mean all this effort to this point was meaningless.

So

"____"

After noticing Akatsuki got up again, the program created Gouki immediately turned around.

"Very good ... Come on."

Akatsuki smiled.

He will never be beaten by his father. Whether it is the person himself, or computer program that was written by using his past data it is the same.

Then wining is the only option.

Here and now, I will win.

But.....his whole body is worn out and completely unable to move.

Perhaps due to receiving such serious damage, his brain signals aren't communicating with every nook of his body.

What can he do?

Therefore Akatsuki must try something new for the first time.

He is going to manipulate the Kei in his body, and raise the physical limits of his body. And then send an endless supply of Kei to certain parts of the body. Making it possible to dramatically strengthen that part to fight.

So

"Theoretically, its not impossible."

After muttering

Ousawa Akatsuki will use renkan keikikou -- to manipulate his "brain".

Part 10

At the same time.

Akatsuki's figure vanished from the holographic images that Kubota was watching.

"--Err."

Kubota frowned.

The computer generated Gouki also lost track of Akatsuki in the same way. Then his body was suddenly blown away. After regaining his balance mid-air, he then was smashed into the ground.

"____"

The programmed Gouki immediately summoned a Japanese sword.

He quickly look around, and immediately slashed at an empty space--that moment the Japanese sword split in two and the broken piece flew away.

"This is"

Who would ever think such a thing would work, the answer is obvious.

In the kaboratory there's only one person.

However, Akatsuki's figure is not visible.

On the screen, Gouki was without a weapon and was being unceasingly pummeled.

From top to bottom, from front to back and side to side, Gouki was not able to respond and received attacks from every angle. They were not only fast but they were heavy, and the attack power of just one couldn't compare to anything till then. Dazzled by the continuous attacks, it was at such a rate that it look like a machine gun hit him.

-- Then a warning message suddenly appear on Kubota's holographic screen.

The damage Gouki was receiving was outside the range the system could handle.

So

The end of the battle came very abruptly.

The attacks the system sustain was completely beyond its processing capacity, the exercise system was forced to shut down.

The programed Gouki turned into countless particles of light, and vanished into the void.

Kubota witnessed it all.

".....Is it a "Area"?[\[11\]](#)

While mumbling, the image of laboratory started to change.

The spot where Gouki vanished was flickering.

Just like watching someone's image passing through steam,
until a youth appeared.

Ousawa Akatsuki calmly stood in the middle of the laboratory.

Chapter 4 - Realizing the Point of the Fall

Part 1

The space was filled with many people creating an atmosphere full of vigor.

There was food, clothes, travel, and household goods that went beyond the basic elements.

Also it had the everyday "food" available in most markets or shopping centers an ordinary family needed.

There was light music playing in the background as the limited time specials were announced to its shoppers. He was shuttling back and forth through the brouhaha in the store planning tonight's dinner.

In the crowded supermarket Onizuka was slowly carrying his shopping basket.

The menu has been decided that tonight was going to be curry, and tomorrow morning was also going to be curry.

In order to satisfy Tiana's insatiable appetite, he decided to prepare breakfast at the same time to make it easier on him.

It should be fine to just put the left overs in the fridge.

Tiana had every intention of letting Onizuka pick out the dinner for the household. Even though he loathed the idea, he still went to the store to buy it.

Before he put the curry into the shopping basket, Onizuka checked out the instructions on back of the package.

"..... It seems very troublesome."

After reading the cooking steps, Onizuka slightly knitted his eyebrows.

Onizuka was used to eating fast food packages of curry, but instant curry and curry are different. It was more than just putting the pouch into boiling water for a few minutes.

"Do not underestimate curry. You have to have patience and take it one step at a time to have delicious curry, uh-huh."

Tiana was walking next to Onizuka while waving her index finger from side to side, she knows all too well the details of good curry.

"Ah, okay okay."

Onizuka was already out of patience.

"The question is, which type of curry do I want more....."

The popular preference of curry was nothing more than beef, pork or chicken.

Seafood curry was certainly a choice. However, it was too cumbersome of a food, and obviously not suitable for a beginner.

It would be a better to choose simple meat Curry -- Onizuka thought. He also thought that way because chicken or pork was on sale.

"Pork curry! I want it with streaky pork! Once its cut into bite sizes, then sits in the stew for awhile it becomes so delicious. Oh and it's hard to mess up....."

Tiana then went on and on, describing the taste of plump and tender streaky pork intricate detail.

Just the very mention of food, and Tiana doesn't know how to moderate herself.

Onizuka casually chimed in several times to make it look like he was paying attention.

"All right. Well, since you understand it so much and said its your favorite so many times, you can go to the meat counter and pick it out."

Onizuka then directed Tiana to the deli area.

He watched an ecstatic Tiana leave to the fresh meat section, while Onizuka went to the produce section. He still needed to buy the carrots, onions and potatoes to go in it.

Onizuka got his vinyl bag ready for the vegetables, and then grabbed whatever was on top of the pile -- without even looking once, before he tossed the bag into the shopping basket.

He basically did not care whether the ingredients were fresh or not.

After all, he's not a chef and as long as they don't get sick its fine

After picking out the necessary vegetables, Onizuka made a u-turn and headed to buy some more coffee since last night he ran out.

"..... Oh, that's right."

Then Onizuka suddenly stopped, he seemed to remember something.

Next to the produce just happened to be where they kept the rice.

The hand-rolled sushi they had yesterday significantly reduce his stock of rice.

After all, he had cooked six cups of rice equivalent to twelve bowls of rice, of which about seventy or eighty percent went to fill Tiana's stomach. And tonight it was curry, a dish that mainly relies on rice again.

"Just in case, I better buy more."

Onizuka picked up a cheap five kg bag of rice.

"....."

After he thought for a moment, he switched it with a ten kg bag of rice.

The shopping basket instantly weighted more than ten kilograms, he now to struggle to carry it.

"Uhh, this is seriously heavy. Damn....."

Onizuka swore loudly.

He was voluntarily doing something troublesome for others now. And deep down he felt pretty good about it. Maybe he wasn't just thinking about himself anymore, and started to care about someone else's burden?

Part 2

Some time later.....

"Ken-chan, Look, I found some big chunks of streaky pork. SUGOI!"

Tiana had come back with a big smile on her face.

Onizuka looked in her basket filled with chunks of streaky pork, and later found that Tiana munching on something.

"..... Are you eating something?"

"I got a sample of roast beef from that Oba-chan."

Tiana said as pleased as punch.

"Oh, I got a piece for you."

After saying that, Tiana gave him a toothpick with some roast beef stuck to it.

"It's free..... you can eat it. "

Mildly embarrassed Onizuka shook his head to refused, but Tiana wasn't about to let him off so easily.

"I've already got this one, this one is for YOU, Ken-chan."

"..... Tch!"

Having experienced her stubbornness before.

Reluctantly, he took the roast beef from Tiana. But after he chewed on it for a bit.

"..... This isn't roast beef. This is bonito."

The fish station was ahead of the meat station, and they were giving out samples in front of the vendor's booth.

"....."

After hearing that, Tiana blinked her eyes in surprise.

"Ooooh..... the taste of roast beef and bonito are extremely close
."

"You're like a pork curry aficionado, I can't even imagine that
you didn't know the difference between the two after eating them."

Just when Onizuka was shaking his head in amazement,
suddenly a melody could be heard playing.

-- A text."

Tiana took out her cell phone and after she read the message.....

"-----"

She got really quiet, and exuded grim look completely unlike
her usual self.

Onizuka held his breath, it was like the busy supermarket froze
for an instant.

Although he tried to asking her "what's the matter," he couldn't
get the words out.

Her imposing demeanor completely suppressed him.

After some time.....

Tiana slowly put her phone away.

"Oh..... I'm sorry, you were saying something."

At once, she restored her expression even the giant smile on her face, as if nothing happened.

The ice-cold atmosphere just like that was gone.

But.....

"Ken-chan, I find it hard to talk about that....."

".....What on earth?"

It was still her usual smile and tone.

But her words were like they came from a totally different person, Onizuka response was short.

Then her natural voice returned to an eerie one:

"I have immediately hurry off somewhere, let me say goodbye here."

The words themselves gave Onizuka a bad premonition.

"....."

Onizuka silently thought -- where you go was your choice, and had nothing to do with me.

Its not like I'm your master and you need to ask permission first. She was just someone who forcibly started to live with him, so its not something he needed to worry about.

"..... What about the curry?"

The shopping basket was already full with the ingredients that Tiana and Onizuka picked out.

They decided to have dinner together, that was why there were so many things.

If it was just Onizuka, he would of simply eat instant curry and not picked out so much.

"It is regrettable that I can't eat Ken-chan's curry, but....."

Tiana's expression looks somewhat lonely, and felt very apologetic.

"The truth is this matter is much more important than food."

-- And the way she said it sounded like she was saying goodbye forever.

Part 3

"Well....."

Kaidou Motoharu just sent a text to Tiana and folded his cell phone closed.

At the moment he was at the closest station to JPN Babel.

He was sitting on a platform bench watching the commuters exiting and entering the tram.

The text he sent contained the necessary information on how to take the <Phoenix cells>.

Include with the message was a pdf with blue prints of JPN Babel he covertly made while attending classes. Also included was the best infiltration route, and the most likely place the <Phoenix cells> were being kept. It could be said that Babel's security guards and security system made the campus watertight.

However, it wasn't foolproof. The back up security system had a hole, moreover it was intentional.

Because,

"In the best case..... they can eliminate intruders in one fell swoop."

Babel -- namely COCOON, were most wary of anti-Babel terrorists with special abilities. These terrorists were alternate world returnees who didn't want Babel to manage their lives and preferred to resist the world.

However, only a handful were extremists that take hostile action. Most have chosen to live incognito to escape the reach of Babel, while the extremists were the ones willing to fight on the front lines. After all, Babel or COCOON manages -- rules the

world, compared to that power the terrorist's power was far too small. Thus any terrorist actions were limited to guerrilla warfare, such as sabotage or suicide bombers. The best way to lure out these terrorists were to give them an opportunity to attack. For a terrorist this was known as hole.

Then COCOON could eliminate these terrorist they exposed one by one.

Such as Tanaka, who made the training program go out of control.

Or how Phil Burnett took advantage of the undermanned security during the ranking tournament.

"But now, my situation will be very dangerous."

Although Kaidou hadn't let been caught by his short and curlies , he was now up against Hikami Kyousya.

Kyousya was trying to use a long line to catch a big fish -- This was not the first time Kaidou sensed this.

Kaidou tried to keep his free and carefree Babel student lifestyle , he had better bravely jump into the trap..... because the situation had changed.

The calm and collected Hikami Kyousya unexpectedly started to act arbitrary.

If Kyousya was assuming the risk of betraying COCOON, at first glance —

His goal must be worthy of throwing away being apart of the top of the world -- COCOON.

"Though I hate troublesome things..... I guess I have to take the initiative over there."

It doesn't seem like Hikami Kyouya would betray COCOON, and become an ally of "Crimson Twilight."

A troublesome enemy will be born besides COCOON if "Crimson Twilight" sits back and waits.

It might have been foreseen by their leader Cecil, and was why she ordered Tiana and himself to seize the <Phoenix cells> from Kyouya.

However normally there was no way of knowing where Kyouya was concealing the <Phoenix cells>, or if he even had them. The vast campus had numerous school buildings, furthermore was the gargantuan size of the tower of Babel. Even Kaidou, who was familiar with the campus, couldn't put up a guess to where the <Phoenix cells> were stored.

However their leader Cecil · Endheart inspected Kaidou's floor plans, and after categorically looking over it.

-- She pointed to where the <Phoenix cells> were now being kept in JPN Babel.

That was purely woman's intuition, and there wasn't any corroboration. At first glance it would look like speculation without any basis.

However, that was intuition of the leader of the world's most powerful terrorist group "Crimson Twilight."

"..... Ah, they should be right here."

Kaidou knows that Cecil's intuition had never been wrong before.

That night when the <Phoenix cells> where being delivered, Cecil made it a priority to meet with Akatsuki by chance. She already seemed to know the route was just a decoy.

To be the first to inherit the leadership after the found of the world's most powerful terrorist group "Crimson Twilight" her strength naturally can not be underestimated.

"Tonight's the....."

Kaidou muttered. The next step in the plan was for Tiana to seize the <Phoenix cells>. Babel was already keeping their eyes on Kaidou, so he will play a diversionary role to scatter the enemy. Kyouya's end game was still unknown. It seemed though the <Phoenix cells> played a very important role in his plan, as long as the <Phoenix cells> were taken from his hands all his plans would be impeded.

On the other hand, if Kyouya had some other goal in mind --



Then at that time.....

"Well.....it still a good story that ends in murder."

Even if he was up against Hikami Kyouya the result would be the same.

He was only one person, but as long as he teamed with Tiana there was no way they will lose to Kyouya.

While thinking over the odds of success, Kaidou slowly lowered his head.

Since it was the evening, the platform was jam-packed with the after work crowd.

Still sitting on a bench Kaidou Motoharu momentary smiled wryly, but it looked too ghastly to be called bitter smile.

The Monorail Tram also happened to arrive at that same time on the opposite platform.

Kaidou slowly looked up. The shrill look of a terrorist disappeared, replaced by a neutral look.

".....EH? Is that....."

The tram slowly departed. On the other platform among the crowd Kaidou spotted two familiar faces. Even mixed in with the crowd the two striking beautiful young girls attracted his eyes.

Ousawa Miu and Nanase Haruka.

A rather unusual combination. They both had a serious expression, not one found on a holiday outing. They also had several men following a little behind them.

Their poise was impeccable, no doubt part of Babel.

Miu and Haruka also seemed to have noticed they were being shadowed.

But they were simply ignoring them.

"Oh, God forbid if I don't already have enough trouble on my plate."

He watched them walk through the ticket gate and start to descend down the escalator. He mumbled as he also took action.

Part 4

As the debug mode Gouki disappeared the exercise program ended.

Because of the special barrier in place all physical damage was converted to mental damage. Even if it was not life-threatening, still the pain felt from the attacks remained. Akatsuki changed the flow of the Ki inside his body using renkan keikikou to allow his body to recover.

After some time, it recovered to the extent that there wasn't any problem to move around.

-- Old man, I will be over there shortly."

Akatsuki left the laboratory, and headed to Kubota's workshop.

The sun was gradually setting, lengthening Akatsuki's shadow. It looked like he was chasing his own shadow. After walking for some time.....

".....Your back?"

Kubota said while waiting with Sleipnir in front of the workshop.

"How about it --- your impression after trying my exercise program."

"Well..... I did work up a sweat."

Akatsuki smiled.

"For merely killing time its not bad, but I was nearly crushed along with the spare time --"

Akatsuki said while looking down at his fist.

-- Anyway, I was able to obtain a reward, and I think for anyone trying to get stronger the program isn't that bad."

"Ah..... That's good."

Kubota asked for Akatsuki thoughts, and then changed the subject.

"The maintenance on Sleipnir you asked for and your AD synchronization are complete. Here."

He pick up the AD and threw it towards Akatsuki. He readily caught it with one hand.

"Thanks. This will be a big help."

Akatsuki slipped the AD on his wrist, and tossed the borrowed one back to Kubota.

After Kubota received the AD he turned around and headed to the back.

"I have other things to finish, you better head back quickly. There is a comprehensive system update today. If you are too slow in leaving the campus you will be trapped inside the barrier."

"Eh..... the Old man still has work to do?"

Akatsuki said.

"That was my bad, I would have came back another day when the Old man's talents weren't as needed."

"There is no nothing to worry about. I said system update, but the ones implementing it aren't our engineers. And Hikami Kyoushi is overseeing JPN Babel."

Kubota continued,

"In order to facilitate the management and operation of Babel, COCOON needs the most efficient system. However each Babel has very different operational policies drawn up by COCOON, as well as the management of each school. One way or another they are involved in highly classified intelligence, so the system updates have always been handled by COCOON. Then the data and parameters are lowered so that our engineers can manage the system."

"Hmm..... very cautious."

Akatsuki was looking up at the tower of Babel.

-- In other words, JPN Babel is Hikami Kyoushi castle, huh?"

He was looking at the top floor -- the Student Council's room.

Akatsuki narrowed his eyes.

"....."

A few days ago, in order to prevent a war between humans and Demons, Akatsuki along with Miu once again visited Alayzard. And when they achieved their goals they returned to this world --

The dimensional shift would have been detected by Babel and recorded on their "Apocalypse" network server. Naturally there was possibility that a system error occurred.

However, there was no response by Babel, who must not let any returnees from alternate worlds slip through.

In other words, someone deleted the record.

"Hikami Kyouya..... did you do a good deed?"

During spring break the school was a ghost town.

A person with proper access to delete a dimensional shift recording from the "Apocalypse" server, which contained highly confidential information on alternate world returnees, would be very limited.

When Akatsuki heard the news from Haruka over the phone, he didn't reveal his inner doubts.

However, if someone entered the server archives and deleted the dimensional shift recording --

The most likely suspect would be Kyouya.

-- Of course, he didn't know what his end game.

That was probably why Haruka said not to be rash.

Even if the perpetrator was someone else, they surely have an ulterior motive.

..... It was probably fine.

Akatsuki turned his back to the tower of Babel.

If they try to harm me or my other companions, Akatsuki will crush them without mercy.

Even if the other person was one of COCOON's managers of the world like -- Hikami Kyouya.

After the end of the battle, they should be able to know the answer.

Not in an exercise program that renders the "past."

Currently, my father and brother are standing at the top of the world -- Its up to me whether or not I have qualifications to confront them.

Part 5

The setting sun dyed the sky a fiery red.

The night sky gradually covered the vicinity. This time of the day inspired nostalgic feelings in wandering hearts.

A quite voice could be heard echoing throughout the hallway of JPN Babel's school building.

"Oh..... I'm sorry to hear. Thank you for working so hard."

The owner of that voice -- Uesaki Ryohei quietly pushed the end button on the cell phone.



Ending the call.

Then, he ruminated again the contents of the conversation he had an hour ago.

".....As expected."

Ryohei scratchs the back of his head.

Then Minami standing next to him asks with a wooden expression:

"Ryohei..... are you definite yet?"

"Un, apparently no mistake."

Ryohei suddenly sighed.

"There's nothing we can do about it."

"Ah....."

Minami nodded, and both of them began to slowly walk.

Towards the student council room.

Part 6

-- In JPN Babel's student council Uesaki Ryohei serves as a secretary .

When you say "secretary" it refers to writing down the minutes of their meetings, or a person in charge of all the documents.

However, JPN Babel's student council secretary also had another job.

Like Vice President Nanase Haruka who assists the student council president Kyouya, and at the same time serves as the chairman of the discipline committee that maintained the order and security of the school.

JPN Babel's secretary in addition to transcripts of the student council was also responsible for "information management." A few hours ago, certain information was brought to his attention.

It was data about an unusual event that occurred in this special autonomous region two days ago. It was a report from the <peace preservation corps> that links two or more incidents and accidents together.

The report itself wasn't a problem.

The analysis and details of the accident or incident in the initial investigation and the subsequent investigation were compiled into different formats and both showed nothing suspicious.

So naturally this had to do with content.

"The problem is here."

Uesaki Ryohei painfully mutter.

There weren't any problems with the content in the reports.

However, the problem lied in the number on the reports.

Exactly what is the problem?

The file creation date displayed on the screen.

Almost all the written reports were filed today or yesterdays after the events took place.

Only there was an exception -- at midnight the day of the incident. When the highway traffic cameras system failed, and the reports of suspected man-made explosion damaging the tunnel the archive date on that file was three days ago. Which would mean it was created the day before the event occurred.

A very rudimentary mistake was made when someone tried to make a fake report. According to the date on the report the <peace preservation corps> had predicted it would happen.

In fact, it was unnecessary for the <peace preservation corps> to be autonomous. However, this was an error that should never occur.

Inconsistencies in the file creation date and time were held in highest priority to watch out for.

If such a mistake occurred then that leaves only two possibilities.

The person in charge was too careless --

Or there was a strict order to falsify the prepared data in advance.

A person with any brains would automatically disregard the first possibility, Ryohei naturally was no exception.

After that, a new problem arisen besides determining if the <peace preservation corps> betrayed us.

The report in question, made a reference about quickly blockading a highways around midnight. And that night all the highways in the special autonomous region were sealed off.

However, highways in the special autonomous region were not just simple roads.

They were distribution routes of very significance.

Besides the people in charge of the special autonomous region, COCOON -- namely Kyouya. No one else had the power to block those highways which supply vital goods.

Also in an erroneous report, it mentioned that Kyouya ordered the closure of the highways. Even if this was the <peace preservation corps> acting on their own, specifically stating that COCOON / Kyouya issued the order was undoubtedly asking for trouble.

The only explanation for that erroneous report could be it was all Kyouya's idea.

Just to be sure, Ryohei contacted an acquaintance in the <peace preservation corps> and subsequently confirmed the truth. The name on the account that examined the report that evening turned out to be the corps superintendent general.

As a result, he had a rational reason to believe there was no mistake.

It was because their was absolutely no way the corps superintendent general would have the nerve to betray Kyouya.

..... After all, he was a middle-aged man that Kyouya personally selected to be the superintendent general to be his figurehead. He didn't have any real power.

Then the answer becomes easy.

Kyouya shaped the events that occurred two days ago.

"But Ryohei..... isn't possible this was a secret order from COCOON?"

"Unlikely."

To Minami's possibility Ryohei shook his head.

Denying this possibility.

"If it really was secret order from COCOON, why forge a report ? And in first place why publish a highly classified document? After all, a secret operation of COCOON's his high would only be carried out with their personnel."

"Then....."

"Uh huh..... this is an arbitrary decision of Kyouya's."

Mostly likely the superintendent general was called by Kyouya beforehand to make a report in a hurry and panicked. After all, Kyouya was a member of COCOON, and was personally asked and entrusted with an extremely important matter. Because of the tension caused by the urgency not to fail and because of the excitement of gaining a favor from Kyouya the superintendent general presumably lost focus and unknowingly made a mistake. Even the admittedly astute Kyouya miscalculated in the rush.

"..... Does this not need further investigation?"

Minami asked.

"There are several other events related to the highway incident, perhaps....."

"Hmm, there might be a relationship."

Ryohei nodded, and the fact was he was also thinking about such a possibility.

Indeed further investigation may unravel some additional clues and establish a better connection between the incidents, which is likely to clarify the reason behind them. But then, you have to consider the worst case scenario.

"In any case, lets talk to Kyouya first before we explore any deeper than this."

So.....

Ryohei and Minami stopped. They have arrived at their destination -- the Student Council room.

Uesaki Ryohei thought -- they had the right to know.

They should know what Kyouya was thinking as well as his plans for the future.

And if Kyouya wasn't taking the right path.

Then this shouldn't fall to other people -- They should stop him.

The reason was very simple.

"We are..... not just Kyouya's subordinates, but his friends."

They opened the door, and walked into the classroom.

To know their best friend's real intentions.

Part 7

Surrounded by silence, it was as if the lively commotion of last night's pajama party never happened.

In the Ousawa home only one person remained. Sitting on the sofa in the living room, Listy muttered:

"I see..... this is the first time for me."

Since she followed Akatsuki to this world.....

Today was the first time she was left all alone.

..... Very unpleasant.

Anyhow, she still couldn't settle down.

The silence after dusk when the world began to darken brought unspeakable loneliness to Listy.

For Listy, this place was in an unknown country in an unknown world.

Once Akatsuki and her other friends were not around, Listy didn't know what to do.

-- However, now wasn't the time to be complaining.

The reason was very simple.

"Its all my fault....."

Listy muttered.

The reason why Miu and Haruka went to JPN Babel was not entirely for Akatsuki.

It was also because they wanted to keep Listy's existence a secret.

As a result -- intense guilt overwhelmed Listy's heart causing her great suffering.

When she thought about how her own existence became a burden to Akatsuki and Miu, Listy was beside herself.

What she wants was to be able to do something for everyone.

She also knows that nothing could be done.

Listy now can only keep silent in order to avoid any more trouble for them. Her powerlessness only added the regrets in her heart. She could no longer withstand the unbearable silence that she brought about.

".....!"

She got up from the sofa and walk out of the living room. Then she walked over to the stairs headed for the second floor.

Part 8

Listy was not going the room her and Miu's share, rather to the room of the current owner of the Ousawa home -- Akatsuki's.

Standing in front of the door Listy hesitated for a moment.

"....."

After gently turning knob, she opened the door to his room.

She was here along with her other fiends last night to save Chikage.

"Ah....."

Listy was standing in the center of the room, and blushed a little while lightly hugging herself. It is because she recalled last night when Akatsuki was touching her.

Listy could not help but think at that time Haruka never tried and stop Akatsuki —

What kind of influence do you have on everyone?

If something really bad happens —

Right now.....how can I think of such a thing?

Listy slowly walked to the bed against the wall and sat down on top of it.

She pick up the pillow resting on her lap and wrapped her arms around it.

She tightly hugged the pillow.

Along with the soft feel, she could faintly smell Akatsuki's scent

"Finally calmed down....."

When she felt a little bit of Akatsuki here, Listy felt relief.

Her entire body relax and she naturally toppled over on top of the bed.

The spring mattress gently supported her body.

"Hurry back idiot."

After quietly complaining, Listy slowly closed her eyes.

Her cheek pressed up to the pillow is expelled the anxiety in her heart a little.

She could smell Akatsuki's scent as she breathed in, gradually her breathing became lighter and lighter.

Her body gradually warmed as she is slowly sinking into the darkness after closing her eyes.

She immersed herself in this feeling, and lost track of time.



"-- Hey."

After being calling out to, her shoulder were gently shaken a few times.

"Huh....."

Listy slowly opened her eyes.

Her eyelids were heavy it seemed she unconsciously fell asleep.

She looked carefully at the cheeky grin Akatsuki had on before her.

"You were so at ease sleeping in a mans bedroom.....I'm gonna have to eat you."

"Food.....EH--!?"

Listy had completely awoken, panicking she sprang to her feet.

She saw the marble clock resting on the nightstand, its hand showed she had been asleep for quite some time. Miserable, she originally only wanted to stay for a little while.

"Th-this is....."

Listy's face was flushed red as she tried to collect herself.

"Seeing you sleep so soundly, I really didn't have the heart to wake you."

Akatsuki smiled.

"Since I'm back, you wont need a pillow."

"I-its just, I am.....!"

Akatsuki saw through her loneliness at first glance, Listy look very embarrassed.

"Umm... ... why are you all alone? Where did the other one go?"

Akatsuki voice had some displeasure in it, Miu is obviously not home.

Listy said alarmed:

"Y-you got it all wrong! Miu just left with Haruka "

"The Vice President? Are they out shopping or something?"

Akatsuki nonchalantly asked.

Listy couldn't help but gasp.

--If you nod right now, you will undoubtedly deceive Akatsuki.

"Uh huh ah, that's right."

Even with extreme disgust in her heart, Listy choose to nod.

Akatsuki is back now, how to explain it to him? Miu and Haruka before leaving had consulted with Listy. Akatsuki clearly holds hostility towards the managers of this world COCOON.

And Hikami Kyoushi is part of the COCOON.

Once she reveals his name, there is no guarantee that Akatsuki will not lose his cool. When faced with the formidable opponent sentimentality will undoubtedly lead to defeat. Everyone made up their minds to become the Akatsuki's biggest supporter.

She doesn't want to be protected by Akatsuki forever -- from now on she wants to fight alongside him. However this is not the time for Akatsuki to have a showdown with COCOON.

If it can be avoided, it should be avoided.

"Oh okay then."

Akatsuki scratched his head, it seemed he accepted Listy's words.

"In that case Before that one gets back, can you give me a minute? There are some things I want to tell you."

"Yes, of course, but why was so mysterious?"

It's rare for Akatsuki to make such a request.

Actually as long as it was important neither Miu or herself would refuse. By how seriously he requested, this matter should be very important.

Then Akatsuki nodded "Ah", before pausing.

While staring into space with a serious look he continue to say:

"I want to also tell you two about my past."

Part 9

After the sun set, the night sky was about to fall.

By the time Haruka brought Miu to JPN Babel campus, they were already surrounded by the darkness.

"There seems to be no one here....."

Walking beside her Miu said in an uneasy voice.

Haruka returned "Yes" with a nod.

"Its now spring break, plus the comprehensive systems updated is tonight. Except for a few staff members, no one else is allowed to be in the school."

However, the number of guards increased to be on the safe side in case of terrorism.

However, to prevent terrorists from taking advantage of this opportunity to create chaos, the security level was enhanced.

Moreover not just by increasing the number of guards, but improving the fundamentals.

..... It seems to be starting.

Haruka confirmed the reaction with her wristband that only members of the student government have.

In addition to the boundary system that converts physical damage to mental damage--

Babel currently launch another system designed to confront illegal invaders.

It was named the "guardian beast system" security program.

Like the training program the that summons monsters. Once an unknown power fluctuation is detected or a fight is detected, immediately Guardian beasts are summoned to suppress the situation.

"But for us..... this may not be a good thing."

Haruka continued,

"In case things go wrong -- we would be considered the enemy."

"Ah..... that's right"

After seeing Miu quietly nodded, Haruka once again reminded herself to be on alert.

She couldn't forget where they are, also couldn't forget their next move. This was JPN Babel, an organization that manages all things related to alternate worlds. In case Miu's true identity was exposed, they both would be charged with serious violations of the rules and immediately restrained. Still it was the worst case scenario, but they must be prepared for it.

If this should happen and their fears become reality. Their only chance was to give it their all at escaping to join up with Akatsuki. Then they could determine what to in the future.

At that time it might be possible to flee to a third world country where Babel doesn't have a special autonomous region -- No, even then getting fake identities to illegally enter may be impossible.

Haruka already contacted Kuzuha and Chikage and informed them on the possibilities. Including of course the worst case scenario.

..... But.....

Nanase Haruka couldn't help but thinking that today they are going to be fortunate, and they shouldn't encounter this bad end.

Last night everyone spent the night at the Ousawa home.

At that time everyone had reached a consensus, and decided on the path they wanted to take.

Therefore everyone was already prepared in their hearts.

In case of an emergency, Kuzuha and Chikage will team up and then take action together. There was nothing to worry about.

Besides the student council may not know Miu's true identity.

Perhaps it was all just baseless fear.

So Nanase Haruka spoke her inner desire,

"Let's go and end this quickly..... and return to Ousawa Akatsuki's side."

Part 10

After entering the main campus in the tower of Babel the silence made the air feel heavy.

Inside the uninhabited campus only faint lighting was needed for the system update.

The moonlight that passed through the windows was brighter.

Haruka and Miu slowly walked towards the elevator.

Only their footsteps could be heard in the dark and deserted corridor.

They went to the student council's private elevator that has access to the top floor of Babel. Inside the fast rising elevator a weird atmosphere was created in the confined space.

"....."

"....."

Haruka and Miu invariably tightly closed their lips not saying a word.

The silence inside only added to the atmosphere in the elevator, but now is not the time to talk or laugh easily. While they waited, and kept waiting they were trying to suppress suffocating tension until the steel doors in front of their eyes automatically opened. After some time, the elevator reached the top floor.

Haruka was the first out of the elevator.

--This way."

Under Haruka's guidance the two walked down the empty corridors.

Other than Haruka and Miu, the top floor also was naturally uninhabited.

While walking in silence, Haruka couldn't help thinking — this is a long corridor.

She walked this way almost every day, but today it was exceptionally long.

However, having thought that the corridor soon came to an end

They arrived at the door to the student council's room.

Haruka stood in front of the door and looked back at Miu:

"..... Are you ready?"

"Uh huh....."

After their final confirmation of their wills, they nodded at each other -- and slowly open the heavy door.

The moment they set foot into the student council room. Haruka thought she had walked into a freezer.

She heard Miu gasped beside her, she might of sensed the same thing.

Of course -- that is not possible.

Because their breath is still transparent and colorless.

The room was just as dark as the corridors, she couldn't help but wonder if anyone was inside.

--Hey, come in..... I've been waiting for you."

From deep within the darkness in the back of the room where the moonlight through the windows didn't reach Kyouya slowly emerged.

He stopped in front of student council's president desk.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, President....."

Haruka said, then gave a little nod.

She wanted to switch on the light sensor, however, since this is Kyouya's classroom he must of wanted it dark. She would need his permission, so naturally there was no choice.

..... No signs of life..... besides them.

Haruka thought Kyouya planned to have staff lying in wait in the classroom, then as soon as they entered they would arrest Miu. But judging form the situation at hand, there apparently was no need to be worried.

Also along the way from the elevators she did not feel any other presences either.

"....." "....."

Haruka and Miu remained silent, they only winked at each other.

For now, it seems the worst case scenario was unlikely.

They both slowly walked towards the back of the room.

-- Then Haruka suddenly tripped on something hard on the ground.

"--Ugh!"

Haruka kick out her opposite foot firmly planting it on the floor, avoiding her from stumbling down.

She walked into the room almost every day, naturally she was very familiar with the furnishings inside. And although it was dark inside she did not pay attention to her feet. Perhaps since inside and outside of the room there was no one waiting to ambush them, she let down her guard.

She was really careless she thought, then Haruka's looked to the left staring at what she nearly tripped over -- his body.

".....EH?"

At that moment, Nanase Haruka stopped thinking.

That was not an object, but its a person.

Uesaki Ryohei and Aihara Minami -- her two best friends were lying in front of her.

Part 11

Although she had stopped thinking, Nanase Haruka immediately understood what that scene represented.

They didn't trip, they didn't fall asleep, and they didn't faint. The object she almost tripped over was Ryohei's right leg -- from the knee it was broken in two places. Not just the bone but the entire leg itself.

Both of them were covered in a white powdery substance.

It was frost.

Ryohei and Minami's bodies were frozen.

And.....

They -- have been killed.

"H-how can....."

Dumbfounded, Haruka couldn't help muttering.

She had convinced herself that she envisaged all the worst case scenarios.

She even thought about the possibility of being attacked as soon as she opened the door, and even thought of countermeasures for that situation.

But.....

Ryohei and Minami -- her two close friends dead was completely beyond Haruka's imagination.

"..... What..... have you."

Haruka could only stare, frozen in place.

-- Still, it was less than a few seconds that Haruka had stopped thinking.

However, it was a opening that could be exploited.

In that split second.

"-?"

Haruka felt a tremendous murderous intent run through her back.

She thought she was dead.

Then suddenly a heavy thud was heard behind her.

"-- Miu!"

Haruka instinctively screamed.

She immediately turned back to look. Miu was lying unconscious on the ground, and her long double ponytail was still floating down to the floor.

"Hmm..... I didn't expect it to go that easy."

Kyouya sneered, it seemed like he was a little disappointed.

"President.....!"

Haruka was biting her lower lip as she stared straight at Kyouya.

-- Ryohei and Minami's death, and now Miu's attack cause her to be shaken.

In her mental state she was not in any position to put up any defense, when Kyouya's sudden murderous intent was released.

However, Haruka and Miu were not defenseless.

They had set up an invisible barrier around them.

But, the magical barrier's protection would only be effective against a magical attack. There was no defense from "murderous intent." Moreover that wasn't just any ordinary murderous intent.

Rather it was from one of the world's strongest in COCOON -- Kyouya unleashed his murderous intent in earnest. Even just standing nearby Haruka thought she was dead.

The impact might not have any effect on the building, but Miu received a direct impact and as expected lost consciousness.

Haruka was now alone to face Kyouya, it became almost impossible for her to move. Still, she desperately began to squeeze out words.

"Why would you do all this....."

"-- In order to realize my ideal."

Kyouya did not hesitate to answer in a cold voice without a trace of emotion.

"However, this is not COCOON's ideal, but my own."

"To achieve that -- it was necessarily to kill Uesaki and Minami?"

Haruka couldn't help but raise her voice.

The fact that her two friends are dead was not easy to accept.

But now was not the time to escape from reality.

So Haruka accepted the facts, and an intense emotion emerged inside her -- anger.

Whatever the reason it was unforgivable.

But.....

".....There was no other choice."

Kyouya said while smiling wryly.

"Before you came, Aihara-kun and Ryohei notice that I was moving secretly and came to find me. They wanted to know what I was thinking so I informed about my plans thinking that maybe they would want to help with it. Unexpectedly..... they wanted me to carefully reconsider."

And Kyouya lightly sighed "What a pity,"

"I didn't want to do it this way, but they both refused to quite about it. This plan must absolutely be keep secret from COCOON, any possible risk factors must be eliminated on the spot."

"They were not only your loyal subordinates, but also your best friends..... they could of constituted a risk to achieving your ideal so you had to kill them. This is your so called "no choice".....!"

Her suppressed anger turned into words, that overflowed from Haruka's mouth.

There was no way such simple words, could be used for justification.

After all, her original reason for joining the student council was because she believed in Kyouya's ideal.

But.....

"Is it so wrong to prefer one's ideal over their friends?"

Kyouya had an ice-cold smile.

Haruka instinctively swallowed as if she was looking into a dark abyss in his eyes. Suddenly she had a feeling of *deja vu* from that coldness.

..... Those eyes.....

She has seen the same eyes as Kyouya before.

So.....

Back when she visited Alayzard with Akatsuki and her other friends.

In the religious kingdom of Aleclasta there was an archbishop in the church of Richard.

..... If she remembers correctly she was called Miranda.....

The face that woman had when she crushed Haruka's theory at the peace negotiations.

She always felt she looked like someone very similar.

At last, Haruka understood the answer.

Hikami Kyouya is simply a second Miranda Quenty.

Part 12

"In short, this is a question of priority. Friends are important, but not compared to achieving my ideal. If needed I would sacrifice everything -- not everyone would make the same choice."

Kyouya continued,

"Just like how you gave up your JPN Babel's student council's Vice President responsibility and discipline committee chairman duty to stand by her and Ousawa-kun side....."

"..... President, you already knew Miu's true identity."

Haruka only said she resigned as the Vice President and discipline chairman for personal reasons. Since her primary reason "protecting friends" would be unreasonable, because Babel and COCOON were already protecting alternate world returnees.

In this case however Haruka obviously must protect Miu from Babel and COCOON.

If Haruka revealed her true intentions, they would have been used against Miu in an in-depth investigation. Then also figure out that Haruka was involved in the situation.

..... Wait, maybe.....

According to that logic, then it was probably Kyouya who erased the dimensional shift record.

"What are you going to do with her.....?"

Haruka asked and,

"Are you going to make her a hostage to force Ousawa Akatsuki to surrender to you--"

"Ousawa-kun? Come on....."

"Ha" Kyouya laughed and,

"His power certainly is attractive and caught my interest. And if it possible I want to obtain it..... however, he is unrelated to my plans, instead it's only a matter of time before he becomes an obstacle."

He looked at the unconscious Miu laying on the floor.

"As for what I'm going to do with her? The answer is simple, she is a necessary piece in achieving my ideal."

"..... Miu is?"

"Yes, she can help me create a true utopia -- a world where the strong and the weak are equal. There would be no difference in treatment nor prejudice. Turning back time to before people were summoned and granted power. So they can enjoy the most basic human rights and freedoms."

"How is that possible.....?"

"As long as she is -- with me, nothing is impossible."

Kyouya smiled. All the preparations will be completed soon.

..... This much confidence..... It seems that Miu must have some sort of special ability.

For Kyouya to take such a risk.

Miu must be well worth it.

Worthy of betraying COCOON, besides being from an alternate world.

-- Nanase-kun, I do want your help, like I said before I admire your abilities. You'll been to an alternate world twice now, you might not even be aware about the new power you obtained. You are now an existence that rivals COCOON or Crimson Twilight."

"..... You really know everything."

"That's right. I know you went to the alternate world Alayzard, and know her true identity. I also know when Ousawa-kun came back from Alayzard he brought along a new girl. I didn't want you be investigated for your failure to report your duty. I only wanted you to think it over. Your obligations outstanding, to assist all the returnees and keep them from being harmed by the outside world. To achieve this, modest sacrifices are inevitable -- originally you swore allegiance to me, and now that the moment has arrived."

And Kyouya finally said,

"Nanase-kun -- Its time for you to carry out the justice you firmly believe in."

A world where returnees won't have to suffer.

For the Nanase Haruka that was also the utopia she dreamed of.

If as he said modest sacrifices were inevitable. She also would be willing to sacrifice herself.

She couldn't find a mistake with what Kyouya said.

"....."

Haruka's mind was in chaos, and she returned to being silent.

A silence that neither answered with an affirmative or a negative.

So.....

Haruka decided to answer with actions instead of words.

She focused her mind on her AD to summon her half-moon sword while transforming her uniform into combat clothes.

"..... Its too bad."

Kyouya without a hint of disappointed on his face.

He was just indifferent.

"In order to protect Ousawa-kun and the others, you prefer to become an enemy of the world? Compared to the well-being of several thousands of people -- no, the billions of people around the world, still you chose only a few people to have happiness."

"In the ideal world the President speaks of even if several billions of people are saved, Miu would not be saved..... and perhaps Listy."

Haruka replied and,

"However Ousawa Akatsuki and our desire for this world, will not only save all those billions of people it will also save Miu and Listy. However sacrificing the President is also a given. We want to create a world in which everyone can happily laughed together, and live together in the same world..... This is Ousawa Akatsuki ideal. I will not give up this world he aims for."

Haruka's tone was resolute.

That was the justice she upholds.

"President Hikami, I will not help you -- nor will Miu!"

Haruka screamed, while finishing her magic release chant letting loose her wind magic.

Her wind tore through the room wiping out everything on its path towards Kyouya.

But.....

"I'll say it again."

Kyouya leisurely smiled.

-- Its too bad, Nanase-kun."

He gently waved his right hand.

The wind created by Haruka suddenly disappeared without a trace.

"Uhh.....!"

Haruka couldn't help but lower her head.

-- Back in Alayzard, for some time she was completely unable to use magic, because her consciousness wasn't link with her body. But then, her magic power along with the others increased a lot.

She single-handedly suppressed the enemy's large army at Gorudono Canyon with her new power.

But, she couldn't believe that even with her new power.

..... She was still no threat to Kyouya.

Kyouya just called her "an existence that rivals COCOON or Crimson Twilight", meaning that after visiting an alternate world twice new powers would be awakened.

She however just awakened to her new powers, and was only at the starting point. In order to harness its full power, extensive training of course was required.

In other words.

There was an overwhelming difference in ability between Kyouya and Haruka.

..... Even so.....

Haruka Nanase doesn't care.

From the beginning she never thought she had what it took to beat him.

What Haruka must do now was not defeat Kyouya.

But protect Miu -- right now she needs to try to flee with all her strength, then meet up with Akatsuki and her other friends.

Of course, because of this difference in ability it won't be easily to elude Kyouya. However, if Kyouya showed a slight flaw even momentarily, she would have a chance --

It was possible to use the high-speed of her wind magic to fly away.

So.....

The first step in her escape plan was to go all out with one strike

..... Next..... was the timing.....

Haruka began counting down in her mind.

..... 3, 2, 1 --

-- Zero."

As she said it out loud, countless particles of light appeared in the student council room.

Haruka by using her magic was able to trigger the security system used to stop intruders -- the "guardian beast system."

Both physical and magical attacks were completely ineffective against those guardian beasts.

Then two Gargoyles appeared.

At the same time, Haruka increased her speed with her wind magic.

-- The system reacted because she was not the only one to use magic.

In order to neutralize Haruka's charge, Kyouya must of used his magic.

The two Gargoyles appearing proved it.

Of course, the system will not attack Haruka or Kyouya because they are students in Babel.

The system most likely detected a conflict between two students

To resolve the conflict the two Gargoyles were summoned in between Haruka and Kyouya

Forming a makeshift wall immune to physical attacks as well as magic attacks.

Haruka seized the opportunity and used the high-speed of her wind magic to charge to Miu's side. And then to simply carry Miu using the momentum created from the wind magic to flee the classroom -- that was Nanase Haruka plan.

However, only one step away from Miu -- no, half a step away...

...

"It really is too bad. In fact, your timing was perfect."

"-!?"

Suddenly, Kyouya appeared in front of her.

..... Its not possible.....!

Haruka couldn't hide her surprise.

The two Gargoyles were in between Haruka and Kyouya.

The shortest distance to Haruka and Miu, Kyouya must first bypass the wall made up of the Gargoyles.

In terms of speed, Haruka believed there was at least a chance of winning.

And for insurance, she created a situation where he would have to travel a longer distant.

But.....

"Hah -- Ah Ah Ah Ah!"

Haruka didn't stop there, instead she slashed her half-moon sword at Kyouya.

Intended to stop Kyouya's movement for a second -- creating an opportunity to escape.

Then.....

"Kin" an ear-piercing metallic rang.

"..... Huh.....!?"

Her half-moon sword shattered into pieces.

It clashed with the absolute zero barrier that Kyouya invented. The barrier defends against all attacks while freezing any object that comes in contact with it.

..... He even used..... such a technique.....!

In that moment, Haruka tasted true shock and despair.

Haruka knew about the absolute zero barrier of Kyouya's, because she had seen it once before.

However, creating that absolute defense required a significant amount of time to activate.

Though it was triggered at that instant, Kyouya must of chanted the barrier in advance. The same way they already prepared a battle plan--

Kyouya was also carefully prepared.

He prepared everything to make sure he got Miu at all cost.

"Oh --"

Haruka stared blankly was Kyouya outstretched his palm, and place it right in front of her face.

A combination of blue and white light gathered in his palm.

Haruka had absolutely no way to dodge at that range.

Kyouya sneered at her,

"Goodbye Nanase-kun....."

She was only able to see his lips move.

Part 13

"-!"

At that moment, Haruka Nanase was aware she could not escape death.

She closed her eyes before the oncoming attack would hit her.

She felt a burning sensation rather than a cold one all over her body simultaneously.

Exposed to Kyouya's ice magic her body must of sensed the pain from the ultra-low temperature as a burning sensation. Confronted with the fear of certain death, and the severe pain that will accompany it, her body reflexively stiffened. But -- she didn't feel any other pain after that.

Instead she couldn't catch her breath.

"!!!!"

The pain was different from what she had imagined. She struggle momentarily, widely moving her hands around.

-- A hand forcefully grabbed her.

Then it wrapped around her her waist, and powerfully pulled her close.

"Huh.....?"

Haruka was perplexed, and instinctively opened her eyes.

A familiar face appeared before her eyes.

"OUSAWA..... AKATSUKI.....?"

This person shouldn't be here, Haruka couldn't help but shout out his name.

"Its all right, vice-president."

Akatsuki told her.

After hearing Akatsuki's voice, and feeling the warmth of his embrace Haruka was sure of one thing.

That it was definitely not a dream.

But..... what on earth was going on? Haruka then suddenly noticed where Akatsuki and herself were. Akatsuki had his arm around her waist, while in his birthday suit.

However, the improper one was Haruka. The reason was simple, they were immersed in hot water and she was familiar with the location.

She was in the Ouswa home's bathroom.

Akatsuki appeared naked in front of eyes, Haruka screamed and desperately tried to escape.

Everything happened too fast.

"....."

Haruka's brain could not keep up, she stood there and repeatably blinked. She completely had no idea how to react.

-- Up till now, she was in JPN Babel's student council room meeting face to face with Kyouya. Why am I in the Ouswa bathroom, no where near were I was?

Then.....

"You're shaking... ... What happened?"

The moment she heard Akatsuki's question.

"-!"

Haruka gasped.

She remembered her best friends -- Ryohei and Minami were dead.

And Kyouya's ice-cold eyes.

Also how Miu was laying unconscious, and that she was almost killed.

"..... Me and..... we....."

"Despair" that word echoed in Haruka's mind.

No more words could come out her mouth.

Extreme fear froze her mind and body, chilling her to the bone.

Even though she was in the bathtub filled with hot water, the trembling of the whole body wouldn't stop.

However.....

-- Haruka."

The shout was like a bolt of lightning shot into her ear, while his two hands gripped her shoulders. Akatsuki forcibly pulled back her consciousness.

"You don't have be scared anymore. I'm right here, there's nothing to be afraid of anymore."

"Ah....."

Those words permeated Haruka's heart. The icy tension gradually began to melt away.

Her body slowly regained its warmth.

"Good..... that's it."

Akatsuki gave her a gentle smile.

Seeing his smile, Haruka's intuition told her --

It was Akatsuki who saved her at that critical moment.

..... But, how?

Before her brain found the answer, Haruka's heart told her; however she never could of expected him to save her, there must of been some way. Haruka started to look at it retro respectively.

Reflecting on how Akatsuki devised a method to help her from a remote place.

The results.....

"Oh --"

Nanase Haruka finally remembered.

In the world of Alayzard, that she went too along with the Akatsuki and the others.

Miu and Listy became hostages, and the method by which Akatsuki saved them. They said was,

"Transfer..... seal."

Part 14

Sometime later they all learned of it.

It was a miraculous reversal at the end of the war by Akatsuki.

Even if they believed that peace would soon be realized, he still did not forget to prepare for the worst. He affixed a seal to Listy during the duel that was used to prove his power.

Miu had a seal affixed the evening after he went into Sherfied looking for an antique shop to buy the seals. They were waiting at the brothel after accidental ingesting too much of an aphrodisiac. They needed Akatsuki to detoxify them.

"Don't tell me..... at that time....."

She knew the answer already.

Prior to the peace agreement, even if Akatsuki was on good terms with the Kingdom of Sherfied it was still enemy territory. So Akatsuki affixed a transfer seal to Haruka, who was accompanying him.

In case of a dangerous situation, he could simultaneously save Miu and Haruka.

..... Then..... I.....

Nanase Haruka suddenly realized.

It was not a coincidence that she was saved by Akatsuki just now.

Why -- There was still that feeling.

She will never forget -- that first meeting was the worst.

He did not even try to follow the rules, she was disgusted how he behaved so freewheeling. Every time she saw him, he began to create all kinds of difficulties.

She was always worried about him in the back of her mind, she kept telling herself it was all in her imagination. Since she was unwilling to face the truth, and didn't want to admit it.

She didn't admit it until she went to Alayzard and witnessed Akatsuki implement justice she believed in.

But.....

That night in the brothel with Miu -- he entrusted my life.

No, it should be before that.

Nanase Haruka was in Akatsuki's safety net.

So.....

"-----"

Haruka collapsed into Akatsuki arms, she was at her limit.

She knew nothing at all, and felt guilty.

She was unable to protect Miu.

And regretted it.

What Kyoushi did was outside her assumptions. The death of her best friends Ryohei and Minami greatly unsettled her. She was reluctant to explain everything to Akatsuki. However, Haruka understood she couldn't make an excuse for this. The harsh reality was inescapable.

We all promised. We swore that no matter when, no matter where.

And Miu said she unconditionally believed me, but I

"-----"

Haruka broke down into tears.

She was not enough.

Her resolve -- nor her strength.

Nanase Haruka was not able to protect Ousawa Miu.

Her irreplaceable friend was taken from her.

Haruka had lost everything.

Epilogue - The Truth in the Darkness

Part 1

Occasionally a muffled noise was heard ringing throughout this place.

The deep bass sound could turn your stomach.

With each step it seemed like time slowed down.

"What the....."

While walking in the dim light of the passage a red light illuminated, Onizuka Kenya tried to cover up his astonishment.

Right now he was at the lowest level of JPN Babel.

It was late at night, however he was still on campus headed towards the high-rise of Babel.

The soaring building was very eye-catching, but the underground -- were also a number of basements that all the staff and students were aware of.

And

The lower most floor supported all of the tower of Babel, also it symbolized the authority of the COCOON. This wasn't simply referring to the structure of the building, the fact was the lowest floor in Babel was top secret.

However, those were all just rumors, not one person had seen it with their own eyes.

He was in the middle of shopping at the supermarket, until Tiana urgently left because of an important matter.

To put his mind at ease a little Onizuka decided to accompany her, which was why he was walking through this forbidden place.

"Well..... Ken-chan is just an ordinary student, so it is normal for you not to know."

Tiana was walking one step ahead Onizuka as she spoke to him without looking back.

"Whether it's the massive data "Apocalypse" server, the boundary system that covers the majority of the campus, the electricity and water circulation system, and the basic life support/environmental program, all of these were in one place the so-called "Babel system". You could say this place is like the heart of Babel."

She took a breath.

"Well..... to be accurate it's right above the heart. Only members of COCOON, who are responsible for each Babel, can enter the "Babel system" the lowest floor in the tower. But before entering, you must pass through the strict biometrics as well as the magic certification to enter the basement. It seems that Tsusukara was the only person in COCOON to pass through the biometrics authentication."

".....'It seems'?"

Hearing Onizuka question, Tiana looked over her shoulder.

With a wry smile on her face,

"That is what I had heard. But then again, Tsusukara died during his tenure with COCOON while in charge of Babel, so....."

COCOON was comprised of the world's most powerful people, and the sky high tower of Babel was its symbol.

If COCOON was destroyed, there grand principles would be shattered.

In order to harmonies the world as well as management it, COCOON and Babel must always be at their strongest.

Onizuka then suddenly remembered something.

"Then what about the server rooms and control rooms above ground?"

Onizuka had once altered the training program leading to the incident in the arena with the control room in its warehouse.

If what Tiana said was correct, then there you can control all of the systems. Also if the security program detected the strange operation it should have been also possible to prevent beforehand. Looking at it from the public safety perspective, there should have been no reason the incident should of been able to occur. Even from the technical side there was no problem. The boundary

system that changes psychical damage to mental damage was many times more complex.

"That was merely the operating or control system for that one place."

Tiana answered.

"As for here, its more like the "power reactor" for all of systems. But they needs engineers and school personnel other than the COCOON to actually operate the systems. Naturally they can not enter the lowest floor, so they need other places to control the systems. Otherwise each operating system must be controlled by COCOON personally, which would take a long time and be way too troublesome."

"....."

Tiana's "power reactor" analogy, allowed Onizuka to immediately understand the difference between the two.

During the training program incident, Onizuka changed the level of the program. And then the terrorist Tanaka changed the intensity of the program making it go berserk. The level and the intensity change were all done above ground.

As for the ranking tournament intrusion the other day, when the self proclaimed "Hero" destroyed the boundary system Babel's engineers repaired it. They were able to restore the system because

only the above ground system was destroyed and its cable was cut from the system going into the ground. The "power reactor" remained intact.

Onizuka then voiced his only remaining question -- the most pivotal problem.

"..... Since Babel's students and faculty are forbidden from entering the top secret area. Then how come an outsider thinks it will be a breeze to walk right in?"

More importantly --

"What on earth are you planning on doing, Tiana?"

Part 2

The day they first met, Onizuka was still in class A and for an instant she passed by him. That was all it took for him to know she wasn't an ordinary person.

The best proof was the fact she wasn't even enrolled in Babel and yet had knowledge he doesn't. He was fully aware that Tiana has untold secrets, still Onizuka allowed the freeloader to stay with him.

So when they were grocery shopping, and she suddenly told him she had to hurry "somewhere" --

Even if the so-called somewhere was Babel, Onizuka wouldn't say a word.

But

If what Tiana said was true, then theoretically it should be impossible for them enter this area. Even one floor below ground it was impossible for an ordinary person to enter.

"It beats me. Actually I'm just following invasion route K-chan supplied. I'm just as confused as Ken-chan on how to get in."

To Onizuka's question, Tiana answered nonchalantly.

"As for my purpose After all, Ken-chan is an outsider, and doesn't know too much... ... view it as I'm looking for something."

"So who is this go-between, the so-called "K-chan"?"

Inadvertently Tiana blurted out some important information, Onizuka can't help but be surprised.

In fact Onizuka did not mean to pry, he just simply expressed his inner doubts.

What's more he didn't expect Tiana to answer honestly.

He thought she would casually evade the question, or just not tell him anything.

Therefore Onizuka obtained valuable information -- Tiana had at least one comrade.

But

".....Outsider? I let said freeloader stay at my house. What do you take me as?"

"Ken-chan is just an ordinary person, I do not want to involve Ken-chan in this."

"....."

Onizuka fell silent.

In any case, he was also summoned to an alternate world and got special abilities.

Officially, it is for the hope for humanity, but in reality he was being isolated in a special autonomous region.

Tiana unexpectedly called him an "ordinary person".

If she views Onizuka as average, then what is above average?

"I've told you, Ken-chan. It be better for you not to come."

"Even if your going to Babel, I don't care about your reasons."

Onizuka looked up at the dark ceiling.

"This is the last chance to turn back, what are you going to do? This area is top secret, and must be equipped with a lot of security cameras. You do not want get in trouble with the peace preservation corps?"

"Ah, actually that's not a problem. Tonight is a comprehensive system update, all the systems will be temporarily shut down. Don't you find it strange that all the way here there wasn't a single security guard?"

Tiana answered with a smile.

"I didn't think Ken-chan was such an alarmist, and had such little guts."

"AH, you idiot! Remember when you skipped out on the check in the cafeteria, the lunch lady remembered my face! You have already caused me so much trouble. I have to eat lunch there everyday at school and they wouldn't let it slide. I was harmed by you miserably!"

Onizuka snorted.

Having said that, Onizuka could not help thinking --

Even if it is a completely unrelated example, he would still accompany Tiana.

Ever since he met Tiana, Onizuka was slowly accepting his past self that he hated so much. It seems he had been redeemed.

Therefore, when he saw the expression Tiana made after reading the text in the supermarket and when she said, she had to 'immediately hurry off somewhere.' --

Onizuka suddenly had a premonition that he would never see her again.

..... Damn it!

Onizuka cursed himself in his mind. He really can't make sense of his feelings.

And furthermore he was reluctant to do so.

He simply thought that he couldn't let Tiana go it alone. Onizuka learned that Tiana planned on going to a secret room in Babel when.... his premonition turned into a conviction.

..... Never mind, I'm thinking to much.

The facts was he inexplicably broke into Babel's underground.

It would be best to help Tiana, and leave here as quick as possible.

Then

"-----"

Tiana suddenly stopped.

"Hey, is --"

--Shhh."

She stopped him him her index finger, before Onizuka could finish his question and then,

"..... There is someone up ahead."

Part 3

Onizuka looked directly in front of him.

In the dark passageway it wasn't possible to confirm the shadow.

At the end there was probably someone hiding -- right after the bend in a passage.

"....."

Tiana killed the sound of footsteps, Onizuka followed behind.

After coming to the end, Tiana stuck her head out around the corner to confirm the situation.

"And sure enough, there is a guard, but....."

Tiana was still somewhat surprised.

"The guard has Babel school uniform on, just like Ken-chan's."

"Just like mea male high school student?"

It was probably someone he knew.

There weren't many students who can appear in this confidential area.

Most likely it was not the Student Council president Hikami Kyoya, but that was also not impossible.

Being part of COCOON Kyoya's face was world-famous, since Tiana didn't recognize him Then who was it?

.....Was it..... secretary Uesaki?

While imagining the possibility that it was Ryohei Uesaki, who is affiliated with Kyoya. Onizuka was able to peer out over Tiana's head to have a look.

"-- EH!?"

He couldn't help but gasp.

Onizuka shrank back right away, to hide his agitation from the other party.

".....Ken-chan!? Is he someone you know?"

Onizuka's reaction was very unnatural, Tiana can't help but question why.

However, her voice didn't register with Onizuka Kenya.

It was not Ryohei Uesaki in the passage ahead.

Still, it was definitely someone Onizuka knew.

..... How did that bastard ended up here?

Onizuka was unable to believe what he was seeing was real.

But, it was impossible that he was mistaken.

Even if Onizuka had no interest in other people.....

He remembered his face from the ranking tournament only a few days ago. He will never forget the face that sent him to the medical treatment tower.

There was no need to double check.

The person ahead of them was unquestionably the self proclaimed Hero.

Phil Barnett.

..... How could was that possible? That bastard was done in by Ousawa.....?

He changed himself into higher dimensional being, a huge dragon, and in midst of the fierce fight he was cut in half by Akatsuki. At least that was the story he heard after he awoke in the medical tower.

But Phil was here right now, moreover he was wearing a Babel uniform.

In that case, there was only one possibility to consider.

..... Hikami Kyoya made this guy his pawn.....

Onizuka stood there expressionless.

However -- it was only for a moment. Because

-- Ken-chan."

Tiana suddenly screamed, along with jerking Onizuka's arm back.

Instantly a powerfull shock wave headed towards where he was originally standing.

"Ah"

Tiana supported Onizuka as they forcibly rolled back on the ground, then he realized what happen. An attack invisible to the naked eye was aimed at where he was standing.

He raised his head up, while his attention was on Phil the attack came from behind.

"Its.....its you ... you ...? "

Onizuka Kenya kept standing this time.

It was also a face that Onizuka knew all to well.

But his face was unusually cold, as if it was a completely different person. With a particularly aghast tone Onizuka,

"Are you..... Tanaka?"

It was the name of a former classmate.

He was a person whom Onizuka unjustly vented his irritation on.

And the culprit that exploited Onizuka's plan to get revenge on Akatsuki by changing the training program plunging JPN Babel into chaos.

Tanaka slowly started to speak -- in a tone different from what Onizuka remembered. It was inorganic and calm,

"When I heard there was an intruder..... I never thought there was a no way it would be you."

"..... He sounds like a friend of yours, Ken-chan."

Unlike Onizuka, Tiana neatly got to her feet and sighed in relief.

"Although I don't have the qualifications to say so... ... Ken-chan should choose his friend more carefully, uh Huh."

"..... It's none of your business."

Onizuka bitterly remarked to her as he got off the ground.

-- Oh, did you miss? How useless."

A familiar voice came from behind him. Onizuka did not have to look back to know who it was.

After all, with the noise from that last attack, and in the first place there was a possibility he was aware of them from the beginning too.

"With only this level of an enemy --"

Phil was interrupted before he could finish.

Because Tiana instantly cut the distance between them and her right fist hit Phil in the gut.



"-----"

The power in the attack caused Phil to slam into the wall behind him.

A loud rumble shook the passageway.

While the reverberations could still be heard after her successful surprise attack she:

"I'm very sorry. You left your body wide open, I could not bear it."

After she finished talking, she immediately turned to face Tanaka next.

"-- Its fine, no need to apologize."

In a sonorous voice, it seemed he wasn't harmed.

Phil Burnett slowly stood up.

"This guy....."

Onizuka involuntarily widened his eyes.

He has seen the extent of his power before.

During the ranking tournament Onizuka fought against Phil, and his level was well above his own.

However, Tiana was powerfull enough to overwhelmed a group of A class students in town. Onizuka knew all to well the formidable power of one of her punches.

It was enough to causally send her opponents through cement walls.

However he received a surprise attack and was calmly standing up.

"What dreadful power. It left several broken ribs, and even some internal bleeding."

Phil smiled, while his whole body began emitting a red phosphorescence glow.

"____"

Upon seeing this, Tiana abruptly narrowed her eyes.

And in a low voice:

".....Oh, I get it."

She paused for a moment.

"It seems -- the <Phoenix cells> have already been transplanted.

"

"Phoenix?"

Upon hearing what Tiana said, Onizuka glared.

He doesn't know what's happening, and doesn't understand how it all lead to this.

However, the word 'Phoenix' actually wasn't so strange.

-- He knew of the biological characteristics that bird.

"There is no way.....he become immortal.....that's just too ridiculous."

Standing next to Tiana, Onizuka Kenya asked her in the bitter voice.

But, no one answered his question, furthermore it didn't change their situation.

So

..... Damn, why did I choice to go along with her?

Onizuka steeled himself, and everyone else gets ready.

The surrounding atmosphere began to rapidly change.

It was strained almost stifling -- the atmosphere of a battlefield.

No escape.

Phil and Tanaka had them outflank.

In the narrow passage a direct conflict is inevitable.

It wasn't just a fight -- if they wanted to survive.

Part 4

At the same time.....

In the student council room where Haruka had vanished in a bright light in front of him --

Hikami Kyouya maintained a hauntingly quiet smile on his face

..... Was that a transfer seal she had spoken of? Presumably, that was Ousawa-kun's handy work as a precaution against me, or was it for some other purpose? It seems it was prepared in case an imminent danger were to approach her to activate.

The fact that Haruka failed to escape using it -- must mean she didn't know about the seal.

-- And because of that a potential enemy escaped.

And as a result, my actions will undoubtedly be revealed to Akatsuki.

However -- it didn't matter to Hikami Kyouya.

Because there wasn't any problems.

By the time he learns of the situation, and makes his way to JPN Babel....

All the preparations will have been finalized.

For "Crimson Twilight" they had already invaded the premises, but their opponents have already had the <Phoenix cells> transplanted. They won't be a problem either.

So

His gaze moved away from Ousawa Miu lying unconscious on the floor to outside the window.

Hikami Kyouya smiled,

"Now then, all the necessary pieces are in my hands -- Let's assume that this world is already mine."

References

1. ↑ aka Scarlet Dusk
2. ↑ temp name
3. ↑ temp a nickname like ken-chan is here, oh-chan maybe
4. ↑ Miu literally means rabbit
5. ↑ 力 Trying to open the door sound
6. ↑ Night crawling
7. ↑ Japanese slang for thank you in English
8. ↑ Cheers!
9. ↑ Type of reanimated corpse aka zombie
10. ↑ Chicken snake beast
11. ↑ Temp Area/ field / domain 領